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THE PARENT AND THE CHILD

HENRY FREDERICK COPE

By HENRY FREDERICK COPE

THE PARENT AND THE CHILD
THE WEEK-DAY CHURCH-SCHOOL
THE SCHOOL IN THE MODERN CHURCH
EFFICIENCY IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

NEW YORK
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THE PARENT AND THE CHILD

Case-Studies in the Problems of Parenthood

BY

HENRY FREDERICK COPE

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Author of "The School in the Modern Church," "Efficiency in the Sunday School," "The Week-Day Church-School," etc.

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THE PARENT AND THE CHILD

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CHAPTER I

THE POINT OF VIEW

This book seeks to apply the "case method" to the field of moral and religious training in the family; that is, every chapter is not only a problem study, but it involves the study of a real case, one that has been definitely presented to the author and one that involves actual situations. Also, cases in which the problems have been met are specifically stated.

There are no fixed prescriptions for the problems of parenthood, and yet it may be worth while to offer to a wider and more general audience some of the answers to parents' questions which were prepared for specific individual cases. Some of the problems were stated in correspondence and others in conferences and meetings of parent organizations. Whatever defects the discussions may have they, at least, possess this merit, that they deal with real situations and that the methods suggested have a background of reality. Every chapter deals with a problem as it was presented by a parent or a group of parents.

On this basis of practical reality, what are the motives and purposes which determine the methods suggested? One purpose controls all: *that through the experience of life in the family children may learn the life of a society of love and good will.** The family and the immediate problem, in each case, are regarded from the educational point of

* The author has developed this thesis in a chapter on The Family and Democracy in his book "Education for Democracy," Macmillan, 1920.

view, while education is regarded as the process of directing experience, especially the everyday experience of children, so that they form the purposes of social love and good will.

"Little children should be seen and not heard," and at that we were to be seen only when and where our parents willed. The ideal child of the last generation was seen only when in best bib and tucker and heard only when he said his little prayers or recited milk-and-water verse. The child of to-day is seen everywhere and heard all the time. Probably one-half of the problems of so-called "family discipline" arise from the difference between yesterday and to-day; they are due to the attempt to make to-day's child follow yesterday's rule. And much of our current pessimism about the young is due to lack of imagination; since they are not what we have been accustomed to thinking they ought to be we cannot imagine that they can be anything worth while.

In discussing the problems of child-training in the family we are not concerned with the purpose of making our children behave as we behaved—theoretically—we are not concerned with conformity to any fixed standard. This is the problem: how can the rich and varied life of the family best help children to develop rich, strong and high character and fit them to become useful, forward-looking, loving coöperators in society? How can the broad purposes of religious education be accomplished in the home?

Much will depend on the point of view already prevailing in our homes. Are we ready for the principle that the family life exists for the sake of children and for the purposes of their education? Or do we approach these studies, saying, "I hope the author will show me how to make my children less of a care and more of a comfort. I want them to do what I want them to"? If the latter, these chapters will be of little help, except as they may change the parents' point of view. Children never can cease to be a care and to cause work any more than education is possible without social effort. No great or worthy

results can follow parental education except at the price of patient, sacrificing love.

That is the point of view from which we may consider all the problems of the family and the care and training of children. The home exists for children. That principle is like a lodestone that must often true our course in all the strange and largely uncharted way of family organization, management and direction, and especially in the consideration of those problems of conduct and character which daily arise. When nerves are strained by the activity of child life, when patience is tried by their inexperience, when the orderly conduct of this little social group seems to be disrupted by their seeming anarchy, still we must remember that they and not we are the controlling consideration. The question is not, What do we desire? but, What do they need?

The problems of child behavior are problems, not because their behavior disturbs us, not because it taxes our patience, not because it is different from our behavior, but because we have the single purpose of so guiding that behavior that they may find fullness of life, that they may become rich, strong, loving and wise.

There are two ways of thinking of these problems; one is to regard family life as a fixed institution and to seek ways by which children may be fitted into the ways of that institution. This is a very simple way of thinking; it is by no means uncommon, but it is totally wrong. The dominating concern is not that we may save the home; it is that we may use it in the best way possible.

The other way, evidently, is to regard the family from the modern educational point of view, as a social institution which determines its methods by its purpose. It has no particular processes to save, but it develops processes wholly by its purpose and by the laws under which that purpose is realized. There is an important sense in which it is true that children rule both home and school since the laws of their growth must determine just how both are conducted. Many of our problems disappear when

we turn from the effort to save the home and fix our attention on the children. From that point of view, when means are subjected to ends, the conduct that distressed us because it deranged the means may be wholly justified by the results in child-happiness and character.

It is important to hold the educational principle steadily in mind. Perhaps the best way to do this is to think of family life in terms of a modern school. A school exists to associate lives so that their experiences may be organized into habits and purposes of living. It develops lives by directing associated action, thinking, planning, willing and experiencing. A home exists that lives may be brought into the world and associated in an experience that will develop the powers of living, that will reveal the meaning of life, and will create worthy and sufficient purposes in living.

The family is the child's first school and his first society. It is so potent a school because it is such a rich society, first in time, close in personal contacts, free in action, varied in stimulus and action, and unconscious in its methods. All the problems of family life are essentially educational problems. They may concern health, but only for the sake of lives and from the point of view of these lives in the whole of society. They may concern conduct, but it is from the point of view of the active persons—rather than the point of view of parental wishes and custom—and, especially, active persons who must live in the total life of society. Whatever else the family may do this is its one, dominating purpose and this its one test: it must give to society men and women who have a rich, strong life and who are capable of living richly and helpfully with their fellows. Great as is the dependence of the nation on the schools yet more does it depend on the educational vision and effectiveness of the family.

Our concern, then, with the family is due to the fact that nothing in this world has as much to do with the determination of human character as the family. Inevitably, whenever social investigators work back through the causes

of human delinquency, they come back to this social source. Inevitably, whenever we face the problems of religious training, we come to realize that school and church get children too late, after the most potent influences have long been at work, after habits are largely formed and life's basic structure built. Nor is it alone a matter of priority in time; the constant, intimate, personal and unconscious tuition of the family group can count, and normally does count for more in every way than the sporadic, formal contacts and tuition of either church or school. So that we study the child in the home because here is at work the process that determines our future society.

NOTE 1. *As to point of view in study of the problems.* The author has endeavored so to arrange the material as to stimulate readers and students in classes to bring forward the results of their own experience and observation. He is conscious of the possibility that some might assume he is speaking principally from the immediate experience of his own family and stating those solutions of problems which that experience has demonstrated. But he has definitely sought to avoid doing this and to bring together the wider and more varied experiences of other parents. Thus the book is, in a large measure a symposium, not alone in the statement of the difficulties to be met, but also in the suggestions on methods of solution.

NOTE 2. *As to method of study.* Where the chapters are taken as lessons it will be well to make, parallel to each chapter, a series of case records, setting down the facts that one can gather which come under his observation in specific families. Further, instead of discussing whether the proposed solutions are theoretically right, it will be well to observe them at work. We need to keep near to real cases, to definite experience. But at the same time it is well to remember that, unless our experience in attempted solutions is guided by sound educational principles the results are not likely to be especially helpful.

NOTE 3. *As to class organization.* The book has been

prepared in the hope that it would prove useful to classes of parents, to groups anxious seriously to consider their duties in the training of children. Surely in every church there ought to be a class for parents, in order that the church might guide them in their work, the very first, most influential and critical of all work in religious training. Such a class should hold itself very close to the real and practical. At least at the beginning it may well content itself with the definite type of problems suggested in the text. Then from these, with interest quickened, and with consciousness of specific needs of knowledge, it can go on to the more general principles of education as applied to the life of the family.

HELPFUL READING

The following titles are taken from a bibliography prepared by Miss Mary Moxcey for The Religious Education Association, and this group of books bears the heading, "The Indispensable Books."

On the Training of Parents, *Ernest H. Abbott* (Houghton, Mifflin, 1908). Parents' tests of themselves. One of the best for textbook.

Religious Education in the Family, *Henry F. Cope* (U. of C. Press, 1916).—"Idealism and common sense are harnessed together. . . . Supplies exactly the text for classes" [of parents] G. A. C.

(*a*) Beckonings from Little Hands (Dodd, Mead); (*b*) The Culture of Justice (Dodd, Mead); (*c*) Fireside Child Study (Dodd, Mead). Fundamental principles of education of both child and parent, concrete cases, inimitable style. (*d*) The Natural Way (Revell). *Patterson DuBois.* Larger and more comprehensive treatment of the entire scope of religious education; thesis—"Child nature is the pivotal point of education."

Sons and Daughters, *Sidonie Matzner Gruenberg* (Holt, 1916). Brief, meaty sketches, considering most of the problems in the modern home and putting all their factors in due perspective. One of the best for intelligent parents.

Child Nature and Child Nurture, *E. P. St. John* (Pilgrim Press, 1911). Probably best available elementary textbook for parents' classes.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by the "case method"?
2. What are the immediate purposes for which families exist?
3. What are the ultimate social purposes of families?
4. What one great lesson, or purpose, ought to come to children out of family life?
5. What are the motives for seeking better behavior on the part of children?
6. In what sense is it true that children govern the home?
7. In what sense is the home a school?
8. What are the principal ways in which children learn in the home?
9. What qualifications ought they to have who teach children in the home?
10. Reviewing your childhood what, in your conduct, gave your parents most trouble? Does the problem recur in your home?
11. Is there any difference between problems of domestic organization and problems of education or character training?
12. If you find a difference, make two lists, under those heads, including the problems indicated in the "Table of Contents."

CHAPTER II

CRITICISM

Stating the problem: "Our home at times gets to be like a cage of monkeys and parrots because every one has fallen into the habit of criticism. Sometimes it is unbearable, as the older ones, especially, start the others to crying or quarreling by finding fault with them all the time."

THE GENERAL CONDITIONS

Questions elicit these facts: the family has four children, ages from ten to twenty; criticism seems to produce most discord at meal times, but often occurs when only two may be together; it is directed at bodily attitudes, words, phrases, clothes, table manners, methods of work; it is often sharp and even cruel in form; it leads to tears, rejoinders, altercation, and even to general quarrels; it usually runs from an older to a younger child.

Another series of questions leads to the judgment that criticism is becoming a settled habit with some, and that even the younger children tend to make themselves unpopular with their playmates by the exercise of this habit.

Do the parents tend to either scolding or habitual criticism of one another or of the children? It appears that at least one of them is of a confirmed critical habit, finds fault with many things and does so in a way to be heard of all. This parent has high ideals, but makes the mistake of seeking to have them realized by scolding at every failure.

What steps have been taken to remedy the condition? Here it appears that the principal remedy tried has been that of reprimand, trying to cure scolding by more scold-

ing. It has not been particularly successful. Rather better success has followed quiet reasoning with older members. One, in particular, shows signs of being cured by having passed through a trying social experience in which criticism caused many a wound.

Now we can turn, with these facts, to the case and consider the problem, aided by the fact that most people have some evidence to contribute from personal observation.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

It is evident that criticism may fall into two classes: (1) that which is caused by a desire to wound, to shame and belittle another, and (2) that which is caused by a sincere belief that there is something which needs to be remedied or improved. The first is simply an exhibition of malice. The second may cause just as much pain but has less reprehensible motives. The second is the more common in the family, amongst its own members.

Each time we need to examine the facts to see whether the act of criticism is caused by: (1) a desire to help another realize his faults; (2) a desire to exhibit another's shortcomings, to show that he is not as good, as clever, as perfect as he would like to be thought; (3) a desire to compel others to conform to our ways; (4) the fear that parents may overlook another's imperfections and thus favoritism be fostered; (5) a desire to assert authority; (6) an expression of the regulator's habits, forcing others to do as we would have them do; or (7) a desire to show how keen we are, how highly our critical powers are developed.

Are any of these motives good? Which ones? How separate the good motives from the bad method? Are these motives always unmixed? Are the self-asserting motives entirely bad? When children inflict mental pain on one another, are they conscious of the real consequences? Can they imagine this cruelty with anything like the vividness with which physical cruelty is seen? On this point

we must remember the differences in children. Some realize keenly social pain while others seem to be armor-plated.

Are there other causes of the habit of criticism? What of the general habits of parents? Do they criticize neighbors, preacher, teacher and children? Has the home any standards by which conduct can be judged other than the separate and individual opinions rising with each occasion? Has there been any training in the art of suggesting improvements, or any in the art of receiving criticism?

SUGGESTIONS AS TO CURE

1. *Does criticism cure criticism?* Will it help to upbraid? Not as a rule; but sometimes it is well to turn the tables on the critic; sometimes he must be made to know the pain he is inflicting. The parent must, however, avoid the habit and example of fault-finding. It is one easily acquired, one of which we may be largely unconscious. Self-examination ought to be the first step toward a cure. Then set an example of method of criticism, as to impartiality, gentleness and fairness, and let your criticism be given most often in private.

2. *Help every one to make motives clear.* This will be attempted usually in private conversations. Sometimes it can be done in a quiet comment on some criticism. If we can help to establish the habit of considering what is to be accomplished by a criticism much of it will be silenced before it is uttered. The most effective method will be that of developing sympathy, helping each one to see the other's point of view, his needs, his circumstances and his abilities. A helpful purpose may be developed, which may turn criticism into practical aid. Older ones may be aided to realize the pain that words can inflict.

3. *Substitute social standards for individual judgments.* Establish family standards of doing things, of table manners, of dress, of speech, of duties. When there are certain things that "are not done" and other things that are implied in the life of the family the child becomes his own

critic; he judges himself, unconsciously, by the accepted standards.

4. *Maintain the right of each one to be himself,* to live his own life and to do things his own way, all subject to and within the limits of the social rights and duties of all. If John chooses to wear a green tie, that may be a subject for friendly jest and discussion, but big sister has no right to wound his feelings on the matter for fear some of her girl friends should think the family has poor taste as revealed in John's tie. Here enters the problem of individual freedom in the development of a common, social will. If the standards of the family are known and if they rise out of the will of all, and if the family has the habit of working together in large interests the lesser things take their right proportions. But criticism tends to recede as the critics endeavor to think things out together and to cooperate toward common ends.

Some less important suggestions may be made:

5. We should insist on a kind and gentle *tone of voice;* older folks can be very cruel in gentle tones, but the tone usually colors the content for younger ones.

6. Let only *one speak at a time.* This will not only allow less time for criticism; it will cultivate courtesy, consideration for others, and patience; it will afford time to think over some harsh phrases ready to spring from the lips, and at least meliorate the noise at some family tables.

7. *Cultivate habits of praise and appreciation.* Let parents try this themselves. Every one dreads blame and enjoys praise. Seldom are the critic's good purposes so well effected as when praise tempers blame. Help every one to try substituting honest praise for honest criticism; that is, find the elements in the situation that we can commend and thus throw the unfavorable elements into relief so that their imperfections are realized at once.

8. *Beware of the habits of expressing all the criticism you feel* toward all things. Some people will have a hard time when they die, if heaven is what it is pictured—and they are there. A pessimist is simply a man who thinks

that life is a business of finding how many worms there are in every bushel of apples. It ought to be a way of finding the worth and joy in all things. It is a common fallacy that we exalt ourselves by tearing down all we can see; we only choke ourselves in the dust of this destruction. The most unhappy people in the world are the habitual regulators of others.

While all these elements may enter in to help, the *main reliance must be upon a change in the wills of the members of the family.* The criticism that rises from a desire to help must be guided so that love will take away the sting; the criticism that is mere idle carping must be absorbed in useful, coöperative service in the home; the criticism that is merely an exhibition of smartness can only be cured by a will to love and help that is stronger than the will to display. Leading every member of the family into the happy experience of helpful service for others is one of the surest means of developing this will to love and help.

CASES OF SOLUTION

In one family this problem was met and largely solved by the children themselves. One of the older boys said, one day, to his father, "Dad, do you know that we youngsters have the habit of thinking everybody is wrong because we hear our parents criticizing everybody?" Now if a parent cannot learn from his children he is totally incapable of teaching them. Probably that father felt indignant for a moment; but, instead of defending himself, he asked for proof, for instances. They were not lacking; and he began to see himself as his children saw him. From that time on there was an unspoken compact in that family to deny themselves the pastime of picking their neighbors to pieces. Then they found that they had touched the cause of their own habits of criticizing one another.

In another instance help came from an unexpected source. A "Good English" club was organized at the public school; the first effect was to make every child a vigilant critic of

the grammar of every other one. Then some one suggested that there were other bad forms in the use of language, such as indulgence in unkind remarks, in the use of words and phrases that hurt. The members of that family acquired a sense of the power of words; they stopped to think not only as to the correct form but also as to the kindly form, the right purpose, and the mêlée of criticism came to an end.

HELPFUL READING

ETHICS, *Dewey and Tufts* (Holt). Suggested as a fundamental book for parents to read when puzzled by ethical and moral problems in the family; helpful in getting the social point of view. See especially Chapter 17.

GUIDE BOOK TO CHILDHOOD, *W. B. Forbush* (American Institute Child Life). See the references to Bullying, Quarreling, etc., in Index, and answers to parents' problems.

CONDUCT STORIES, *F. J. Gould* (Swan & Sonnenschein, London). Excellent stories to read to children to develop their social ideals and to cultivate kindly habits.

THE PARENT'S GUIDE (The University Society). Vol. II, page 172 f. gives good, sensible advice on dealing with these problems.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Give any examples of the seven types mentioned under causes.
2. Which predominates, as a motive?
3. When and how do children learn to criticize?
4. Under what circumstances would public criticism help?
5. How would you try to develop right motives?
6. To what extent does general criticism become a hindrance to initiative?
7. What is the difference between criticism and correction?
8. Give any instances of this problem and its solution.

CHAPTER III

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Stating the problem: "What shall we do with Sunday afternoons? My oldest daughter said the other day that it seemed to her that was the dreariest period of all the week." In this manner an earnest man put his difficulty before us.

Here is a case that presents a problem which has to be met in some way in almost every home. Facing it, the first step was to discover the reasons why Sunday seemed to be so much of a bore, at least as to part of the day, with so many young people and children. And so we put the question, in various somewhat disguised forms, to a number of them. Here are a few of their answers:

"The afternoon is the worst time; there is nothing doing; every one wants to sit around and do nothing."

"From the midday meal till night all I can find to do is to read or sleep."

"We cannot play."

"It's all right for old folks; they can sleep, or take a little toddle around a few blocks, or sit around and visit; but if we have in some young folks it is almost sure to get so lively that we get called down."

"We can see lots of other kids having a good time, playing ball; but we have to stick around and do nothing."

"I suppose I could stand it better if I cared for reading; but I don't care for it much, anyway, and I'm all fed up on it with my school work. There are some people who can't read all the time."

"Dad is always busy on church committees; Mother is tired and takes a nap, and there we are, the rest of us

sitting around waiting for the world to get going again; it sure is a dreary time."

Such answers once might have seemed to savor of a diabolical origin and might have been received as sufficient evidence of original sin. But we have to treat them with more careful consideration. As a matter of fact they are all alike; they describe one common condition, a period of time without a program for young lives. In the greater number of Christian homes Sunday afternoon is practically an accident; it just happens that this piece of the day the church did not preëmpt and no one else, so far as these religious families are concerned, has made any provision for it.

It may be worth while to turn to look at *the parents' analyses* of the situation, as gleaned from their attempts to describe the situation.

"I simply do not know what to do; they plague me all the afternoon; if I give them picture books they want something else in half an hour; if I try telling stories that does not last long, and I am glad when the day draws to a close."

"The trouble is that they see so much play going on all around them; they can't see why they should not play, too. Even good people seem to set no restrictions on their children, and the result is that mine feel we are unjust and too rigid.

"We have tried about all the plans we have ever heard of, and I think the trouble is that children do not want you to boss them around by telling them what to do and by working off programs on them."

"They can't see any real difference between Sunday and any other day; when there are no church services or Sunday school to attend they wonder why they can't do just as they might do on Monday."

"Children to-day are different from what they used to be. Nowadays we never hear the strains of Christian hymns in the homes we pass."

THE CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

Does not this group of statements give us the right clew? We have a Sunday problem because *we have a day, or at least parts of a day, controlled by traditions which we hardly understand* ourselves and which children, who feel the conditions most keenly, do not understand at all. The worst of it is that these traditions control us so absolutely that we seem to be unable to think clearly about the problem, and thus they prevent our being guided by any definite purpose in the use of the day. Outside of the purpose which the church with its services establishes for us we have no controlling plan with the day.

Sunday is a day different from other days. There is almost universal agreement that we need a day that is different. That opinion rises not only from religious but also from economic, scientific and other reasons. If these adequate reasons are perfectly clear and convincing to us they will lead to the principle which will provide a program for that day. Then, when the principle is understood, all we have to do is to adapt its application to the highest good of the children, to adapt it in such a way that this good may be achieved most efficiently, without unnecessary waste, friction or loss, and to help children to base their acts and to play the day on a similar comprehension of the basic principle.

What is the reason for this different day? The older statement is that it is to be a day of worship, rest, change, relaxation and refreshment from daily toil. Jesus said that the day was designed for the good of man; its purpose lies in human good. Man is not to adapt himself to some fixed character which the day may have assumed; but it is to serve his good. As a day that is different its outstanding characteristic is change, change from daily work, daily interests, daily occupations of any kind, change of associations and habits. It may be a good thing that at least most of us have what we call Sunday clothes; they help to make the day seem different. It ought to be the

day of freedom from the restraining toils of daily occupation. It is the man's work that takes him from his family; this day ought to bring and keep them together. For some it is the treadmill of occupation that keeps them from the open spaces and the glory of trees and fields; this day ought to afford opportunity for knowing that the world is beautiful, that it tells of love and lifts up the heart. So, for the child, also, it should be the day richer and happier than all others.

SUGGESTIONS

But how? Should it be by saying to them, "Now this is the way that Father and Mother get the most out of Sunday, therefore you must get the most out of it this way, too"? No. That will not work. The child's way cannot be the adult's way. They cannot enjoy or be especially benefited by the sacrament of the Sunday afternoon nap. They are active beings. If we make piety in practice mean repression of action they may easily become the kind of saints who never have more than a paralyzed piety, the kind that never gets over into business.

In any case we cannot suppress their activity. But we can help them to direct it under principles and toward happy purposes. Perhaps *the first step* toward a solution of the problem of Sunday play and activity is that we adults shall forego our nap and be willing to spend a little time and thought on the problem. The child's greatest need is just ourselves. This day may be absolutely and joyously different from all others to them if we will make up our minds that a large section of it belongs sacredly to the family; it is the one time when we should try to be together and to live a common life. Make it different by devoting it to family fellowship.

Then, next, make it different and make it *a day of high-level experience* for yourself by devoting yourself to finding out what the child really wants to do and by helping him to discover things to do that distinguish this day from others. This works itself out in numerous ways. In some

families Sunday is the only day, save a very few other high-days, when certain spoons are used at the table, when certain dishes are served, when certain walks are taken together, when certain games are played. This does not create a sense of taboo; it develops a sense of privilege and distinction. In one family the father never plays ball with his children except on Sunday afternoon. True, that would be the depth of depravity in certain circles; but that father knows what he is doing, and he is doing a splendid thing with his boys; they are sticking with him clear into manhood.

We may help to make the day different by directing the activity of children into new channels. They want to play simply because play is free, self-directed activity. We can help them to find new ways of free activity, and, as they grow up, these may be ways of expressing loving service for others.

Perhaps we need *a new attitude about the child's play.* So long as it does not interfere with the happiness of others can it be wrong for the child to carry on this ideal activity on this or any other day? Let us not mistake conventions for convictions. It is as natural and proper for the child to play as it is for us to have a good visit with the friend who calls on Sunday. Making that day which is marked as religious a day of gloom will not help a child to love God. Pain and piety are not synonymous. Nor will fitting the garments of our repose on their restlessness make them religious.

It will make the day different for us all if we try stretching our imaginations to see it *from the child's point of view.* If we only could see, too, how different that point of view is from what ours was when we were children! Surely the modern city, on Sunday, would be nearer ideal if it were like the one which the prophet pictures, "full of children playing in the streets thereof," instead of being that deadly, deserted thing that some still cherish in memory.

Above all, *take a positive attitude;* instead of prohibitions be sure that there is opportunity and encouragement

to do worthwhile things. Redeem the hours from their dreadful emptiness. Help children to develop the tastes and the abilities that fill leisure with enriching occupations. The problem of commercialized amusements is due almost wholly to the inability of adults to entertain themselves. We can see to it that the next generation does not have to hire a circus every time it has an unoccupied hour. Develop the abilities of self-entertainment.

Make a list of the things you and your children could do together. Think out whether their ages are such that they need to form one group or more. Conserve the resources of this list. Draw from it suggestions and plans week after week. Avoid monotony and repetition. Yet you will discover some things that children like to do every Sunday; these become the acts that mark the day, setting it apart.

A CASE IN POINT

In one family the more serious elements of the Sunday problem appeared to be absent; inquiry revealed that in that family a single, guiding principle had been adopted, consciously by the parents and so persistently applied that it had become the unconscious rule for all members. They regard Sunday as the day sacred to the united life of the family. All its members will spend almost any effort to make sure of being at home. Guests are invited in, but members of the family seldom go out to stay. Before every other consideration this stands paramount, that it shall be a day of the joy of being together. The program of the day is planned so that it may make this togetherness possible; and the interests of the day seem to center about these things that all can enjoy together.

If younger members desire play it is taken in forms that all may share, as, for example, in good walks, in visits to interesting places, or in flower-gathering in summer. In that family the day is distinctly sacred, and whatever interferes with family unity seems to profane it.

No "blue laws" are necessary. The members have

learned what society will some day learn, that men cannot be regulated into ideal living; that conduct rests not on laws, but on love. Men will do the things they love to do. Laws are like fences, to keep trespassers in the highway. But no fences are or ever will be half so effective as love of the good broad highway of human love and freedom. The law of love that holds that family together is the one law under which our Sunday problem is likely to be solved.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What new interests can you present to them? In what ways can we make the day mean opportunity rather than restriction? Is there not a difference between the restrictions proper to be placed on business, on traffic, on merchandizing and the purpose that should guide our control of the actions of children? What joys and happy duties are crowded out of the week days that may find their opportunity on this day? How may young people enjoy the social fellowship of their groups just as we enjoy our friends on this day? Ought not such groups of young people to have the privileges of our homes? What makes an act right or wrong on this day? Might it not be a greater wrong on our part to neglect the needs of our children on this day than it is for them to indulge in play? Might not many problems of play be settled on the basis of the rights of others?

HELPFUL READING

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY (Ch. 13), *Henry F. Cope* (Univ. of Chicago Press). Contains chapters discussing the principles and describing methods and programs which have been tried.

TRAINING OF CHILDREN IN RELIGION, *George Hodges* (Appleton). The religious duties of parents and the needs of children discussed in a charming, liberal spirit.

SUNDAY IN THE HOME (No. 24 in "The American Home Series," Abingdon Press). A pamphlet on principles with certain specific suggestions on the use of the day.

A YEAR OF GOOD SUNDAYS (No. 25 in "The American Home Series,"

Abingdon Press). Gives specific directions for programs of varied character.

LOVE AND LAW IN CHILD TRAINING (Ch. 1-4), *E. Poulsson* (Bradley). A charming discussion of some of the religious and educational laws of children's lives.

WITH THE CHILDREN ON SUNDAY, *S. Stall* (Vir Pub. Co.). A book, principally, of practical plans of entertainment and instruction for children on Sundays.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Which of the several aspects, or explanations, seems to you to best state the situation?
2. Why do we find different social customs, as to Sunday, from those of a generation ago?
3. What is the fundamental religious purpose of Sunday?
4. Does this differ from its economic and social purpose? If so, in what ways?
5. What is the most common cause of family friction as to Sunday?
6. State your opinion as to small children playing games on Sunday?
7. Under what conditions, if any, might older children play games?
8. What of the play of adults? Is it contrary to the spirit of the day?
9. What makes Sunday afternoon a peculiarly difficult period in many homes?
10. Give any solutions you may know?

CHAPTER IV

DISOBEDIENCE

The problem stated: This problem takes many forms. We can group together a number of cases, as they have been presented by different parents. One states: "We seem always to have trouble with some of our children in getting them to obey, while others make no serious opposition to our wills." Another: "What should I do when my little boy looks me square in the eye and says, 'I won't,' in response to my request or command?" Another: "Why do children to-day have so little respect for the commands of their parents so that they appear to think nothing of habitual disobedience? I can't depend on any one of them doing as I ask."

Perhaps the problem can be stated simply in a single phrase: "Children often set their wills in opposition to the wills of their parents; what should parents do to bring the child to willingly exercise obedience?"

THE PROBLEM ANALYZED

1. *When does disobedience first appear?* Just as soon as any expression of will is possible. Disobedience becomes more conscious, apparently more deliberate, as the child grows up. We are dealing with a tendency which is as natural to a developing person as is the effort to extend knowledge. A child's curiosity is not more normal to him than is his desire and effort to demonstrate that he can do as he wills. The exercise of his will is as natural as the exercise of his legs or his lungs. His will is certain to come into collision with other wills, including the parents'.

2. Is the exhibition of an opposing will an evidence of the child's iniquity? Is disobedience necessarily wrong? Ought we to demand blind obedience? Parents often answer these questions affirmatively. They hold, now that they have become parents, that they have a moral right to expect immediate, implicit, unhesitating obedience and that they rightly accuse the child of sin when he refuses to obey. Is not this the common parental attitude? Is it a right or just attitude? What right have we to assume that the rights are all on our side and the duties all on the side of the child? The simple fact is that, in the family, the will of the child is just as important as the will of the parents. This does not mean that it is more important that the child should have his way than that the course of action you know to be best should be followed, but it does mean that if the case is a mere conflict of wills the important consideration is that the child shall gain in power to will.

For the purpose of the family, the will of the parents, as to any particular act or situation, must yield to, or conform to a yet more inclusive willing, that of the dominating purpose which is to grow these children into power to live the full and efficient Christian life. Probably this is the fundamental element in the whole question, for we have been accustomed to think the child must be wrong in asserting his will. But that is precisely what we want him to do; the rub comes in when his assertion opposes our authority. Ought we not to recognize, in the child's opposition, a power for which we have been watching, the power to determine for himself on a course of action and to stick to it. Instead of being a wrong or a sin his opposition may be the expression of a power which is the backbone of virtue. It is ours to train and develop rather than to repress this power.

The problem is not the one we usually state; it is not a question of how we can make the children obey our wills; but it is a quetsion of how we can help them to develop and control their wills in harmony with the wills of others in the family.

3. *What then becomes of parental authority?* Probably certain types of parental authority fade into the limbo of dead traditions; these are the types based on the concept of the parent as the possessor of the child and of the child as a chattel. This is the kind of authority which most often creates the problem we are discussing. But there is a parental authority which is strengthened by encouraging the child to his will; this is authority which is based on a dual sense of responsibility and sympathy, which expresses itself not by force but by fellowship and leadership. The very word "authority" has so many unfortunate meanings that in this connection we might as well cease to use it. It means the power to control others by force or fear. Control, force, and fear do not make for real obedience; they secure only compliance.

But all this does not imply the loss of what many mean by parental authority, and that is the attitude of affectionate loyalty to the leadership of father and mother which makes their wishes weigh more with the child than any commands could do. We are likely to meet this problem of the opposition of wills in increasing intensity until we transfer our bases of power from authority to loyalty.

4. There is one form of disobedience that is *peculiarly difficult to meet;* it is exhibited by children who seem to have either stubborn minds or sullen dispositions. Collisions here are frequent in the family because stubborn children are likely to have stubborn parents. Of course the fault lies with the children—and they ought to make allowance for their parents' weaknesses; but, being stubborn, they find it difficult to do so.

5. *The form of conflict of will we most need to dread* is not when they say, "I will not," but when they profess compliance and then deceitfully disobey. This is likely to occur when fear prevents an honest avowal of their purpose and prompts them to pretend to obedience.

6. *The problem of the definite opposition of the wills of little children* is not so very different. (a) In some cases they are only experimenting to see whether they can do

as they will. (b) In others they are yielding to the more immediate pressure of play or other interests or desires; the parent's wish simply does not become effective in their area of interests. In a great many instances this is because they have become habituated to meaningless commands and threats and are surprised at the exceptions when parents really look for obedience. (c) One other phase of the case with younger children must be recognized; they feel increasingly the pressure of the social group. Therefore they will disobey deliberately when the will of the parent runs counter to the apparent interest or will of the group. It is hardly fair, when one considers the whole situation, to expect a boy to break up a ball-game when mother calls: "Willie; time to take your music lesson!"

SUGGESTIONS

1. *Accept the normality* of the situation when the child opposes your will. It is just as normal as when some one opposes your motion in meeting. Only a martinet resents the diverging will or opinion.

2. *Rejoice in the evidence* that the child has the power to will against opposition. Consider how much he will need this power. Imagine how you will rejoice if he opposes evil as he now opposes you. Whatever your course may be determine it shall strengthen and not weaken his power to will. Never allow yourself even to think of the utterly wicked purpose of "breaking his will." You might as well plan to break his mind.

3. *Consider the situation* with the utmost care. Do not state your determination with finality until you are sure of its wisdom, justice and love. It may be better to say to the opposing child, "We must take time to think this over." Urge him, or her, to do this. Meanwhile you will consider: Am I insisting because this is the only right way, or simply to save my face, to assert my power? Did I put the request, or command, so that it did not affront my child's sense of rights and his freedom of personality?

Did I help him to see my background of reason and motive? Do I understand his background of reason and motive? What are his reasons for refusal? How does the whole situation look to him? Are my reasons sufficiently reasonable and strong?

4. *Respect the will of those who oppose your will;* respect their right to will their own conduct. Show that respect by treating compliance as an act of volition on their part and not simply as an inevitable reaction to our wish. Show that respect by an appeal to reason and judgment. Do not expect action in the dark.

5. *Discover the causes for opposition* in younger children. (a) Is it the reaching out of a will, like the effort of baby fingers to do something new? If so, help him to use that will in choosing, in willing to do the thing that is right. (b) Is his opposition due to the fact that we have established in him habits of thinking our requests have no significance? If so, we must repair our own errors; we must take time to help him to see the importance of our requests, and we must refrain from meaningless commands. (c) Is opposition due to the desire for the approbation of his social group, playmates and friends? If so, play fair; do not shame him before them. Help him to make engagements for duties and to keep them. Help him to realize his social obligations to the family group as well as to the play group.

6. *Help younger children to discover the reasons for our requests* and commands. We cannot give all the reasons, but we can help them to know that we are protecting them when we tell them not to play with matches, razors, etc. Mamma's Angel Child would cease to appear in print if the parents were as active with their heads before events as they are with their hands in the final scene.

7. *Help children to act socially.* We must transfer increasingly the problems of obedience from relations to us as individuals to relations to the family as a whole. The question must become not so much one of our wills as of the well-being of all. Children act in many families not so much because father and mother are enunciating rules as

because certain customs are established, because certain things are done and other things are not done, because of the feeling or idea that the whole group expects certain kinds of conduct.

8. In the last step we are *working out a common social will* and this is the fundamental process that must always be operating. Always we must try to come together to the point where we both, or all, are saying to ourselves, *"It is not a question whether you will yield to me or I to you but as to how we can agree together, as to how we can have a common will, and, particularly, as to how we can bring about certain results together."* Focus attention on ends to be achieved by coöperative action. In this the parent must lead. We can develop the wills of children and at the same time help them to definitely will what we are willing. Of course a common will means our willingness to find a common social ground as well as their willingness to come to our ways.

The effecting of this common social will does not come by the single act of enlightening and persuading a child on some one question. It is a part of a total social experience in which all members of the family are always using their judgments and wills in working out coöperative living. In the measure that children come into the full confidence of the family, share in its life, deliberate on its programs and feel the responsibility of determining with others its affairs the problems of obedience disappear in the very processes of coöperative action.

9. Will-training includes the control of the will, the development of the power to change the will. This children must learn. Under the total social good they must will to give up their wills, and, for the good of all to do the things they had announced they would not do.

HELPFUL READING

Religious Education in the Family, *H. F. Cope* (Univ. of Chicago Press). Especially chapters XIX-XXI, dealing with problem in detail.

MORAL EDUCATION, *E. H. Griggs* (Huebsch). Good for general principles.

THE GOVERNMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN (No. 14, "American Home Series," Abingdon Press). A pamphlet on this particular problem.

WHEN CHILDREN ERR, *Elizabeth Harrison* (National Kindergarten, Chicago). The conditions that tend to prevent many will conflicts.

THE TRAINING OF PARENTS, *E. Abbott* (Houghton, Mifflin). A sensible help to a better point of view.

CHILD NATURE AND CHILD NURTURE, *E. P. St. John* (Pilgrim Press). An excellent series of discussions of this and other like problems and aspects of child-training.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are commonly the earliest manifestations of disobedience?
2. What are the peculiar difficulties of early forms?
3. What is the essential significance of children's opposition to our wills?
4. What are the dangers of some of our ideas about parental authority?
5. Give instances of unfair commands.
6. What should any parent think of first when the problem arises?
7. What are the dangers when we force a conflict?
8. What is the fundamental social process which solves the problem?
9. Give instances of will-breaking.

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEM OF LEISURE

Stating the problem: "I feel we have a large opportunity that is being neglected; it is becoming a lost opportunity. What has become of the leisure hours, the evening family life? And how can we hold and use this time?"

For the religious purposes of the family the most important hours are those which are commonly regarded as of least importance, the hours of freedom and leisure. If we accept the duties of parenthood we cannot think that our duty is done when the day's work is ended. The hours have all been under a program until the evening; we have been fully occupied with our work and the children not less with theirs. And now, perhaps, we feel we can drop all care. But the question, What shall we do with the rest of the day? is one of utmost importance for the character of all concerned.

Any hour without a program is an hour of danger. Many homes are designed for every exigency except that of leisure. They are well arranged as dormitories, restaurants and places of social entertainment; but they make no provision for the free hours of youth. They provide for the bodies of children but overlook and neglect their higher life. No one thinks of the fact that the search for recreation, for social activity, indicates as real a need, as definite a hunger, as that for which we provide three times a day. Meals are programmed for digestive needs; do we arrange programs for social needs?

ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

We would realize that something must be wrong with the domestic machinery if no one save the old folks ever ap-

peared at a meal; is not something wrong when every evening the house is empty save for those old folks—and probably they are at the movies?

There is a marked tendency to-day to let the home "shut up shop" as soon as the evening meal is ended. Of course, it is part of the trend that has taken everything—education, industry, meals, books—out of the home and thrown them into community enterprises. But unless we can somewhere call a halt the home life will be nothing more than a memory. Indeed, in our tendency to find all recreation outside the home we are letting the choicest part of its life go and thus losing the largest opportunity for character-training that remains anywhere, either in the home or without. There is a definite moral crisis upon us at this point of the family and the leisure hours; it will determine whether the home is to continue to have any personal and spiritual functions or to become merely an economic convenience.

THE DANGER

The danger is that our children shall be altogether taken from us. The school, playground, gymnasium, music, etc., hold them until the evening meal; the movies, parties, theater and other forms of popular amusement demand them for the hours remaining before bedtime. Now if we are their religious educators we must have some time to be with them. *Character training cannot be done by absent treatment.* The greatest need of childhood is the chance to grow by contacts with personality. There must be time and program for the needs of personal growth, and the evening hour is the best of all times.

We have given up too readily, surrendering to the streets and the amusement craze, and assuming that young people would never be content to be at home. That means we have largely ceased to be more than physiological parents; we have lost the opportunity of spiritual parenthood as we have abandoned the effort to maintain contacts with our children in the hours when the soul is free. Does it ever

occur to us that they would prefer a cheerful, companionable home to the street, that they would rather have friends and definite interests at home than be forced to find these outside?

These are hours of high and sacred opportunity. Between work and sleep come the hours, too few and short, that should belong sacredly to the family, the time when we may be together, when all that home has meant and may mean should appear, when there should be forming in childhood's memory the pictures that will make precious the thought of home in coming years, when we cease to be either school-children, house-managers, or world-workers and become just ourselves to one another. This should be the sacred period of personality, the hour of the firelight and the evening lamp, of conversation, merry jest, memories, music and all that opens the heart and lifts our eyes. At such a time the great impressions are being made. In such hours the spirit is unconsciously storing strength for later days. How rich are the memories of the home evenings! How much they have missed who cannot look back on such hours!

But the evening that is so rich, so fragrant, so happy and helpful does not come by accident. It has to be reserved, to be guarded, to be planned and guided. To the child who lives in such a home it all seems perfectly natural; but to parents it means persistent struggle and planning. It seems as though this world, too much with us, envied us this place of retreat and had definitely set siege to possess it. The fashion of the hour scorns quieter joys and would force us to take its way of pleasure and call it our own. It establishes customs and sets up social obligations whose imperious demands make impossible any quiet family intercourse. We need all our strength to oppose these assaults.

MEETING THE PROBLEM

Definite plans. How shall we combat the disintegrating influences of outside amusements? Not by denouncing

them; not by summary rules of any kind, but simply by providing for the evening at home a program more attractive than anything beside. There rests on parents a religious obligation—not less than any other spiritual duty in the world—to provide definitely, thoughtfully and thoroughly for the spiritual needs of their children, and this they may do best of all by a wise use of the evening hours. Somehow we must come to see this period standing out as distinctly and having purposes as definite as the hours set for meals. It is the meal-time of the soul, the opportunity to meet the longing and appetites of the higher nature. It is as religious an opportunity as the home will ever find.

When we see the thousands of young people wandering the streets in the evening we ask, Why is a hard pavement more attractive than a sitting-room and a mob more attractive than the family group? One answer is that there are enough young people on the streets to give a group atmosphere of their own kind, while at home there is no adaptation to young life. It is folly to lay the blame on youthful tendencies as though the gregariousness of youth were a crime. The tendencies are not necessarily bad simply because they are different from our own tendencies; in any case we will have to accommodate ourselves to them. The cheerless home drives youth on to the street. Not less does the home that is selfishly conducted, designed and controlled for the social ambitions or the personal habits of the parents alone. Nor less the home that is simply a background for the display of furniture. Make it an instrument of service. Let the young people bring their friends there. They will enjoy a home of freedom much more than the streets. Let them rearrange the furniture; it is made to be used; it cannot be better used than in ministry to youth. Sometimes they will enjoy quiet reading; sometimes they will want music and sometimes, often, they will naturally demand activity. Books and music and freedom for happy exercise we owe them as much as food and clothes.

Whether we shall find a menace or a means of help in

these leisure hours depends on whether we have the courage to apply the home-life to ministry to the needs of children. Think of it as a means, an instrument, its effectiveness to be judged by whether it has given happiness to other lives, by whether it has revealed to them the joys of social living and helped them to find the satisfying and enduring joys of life. Therefore plan your programs of leisure hours and make provision in the home itself that these may be the times when youth learns what home really means.

There is no complete solution of our problem; it will often baffle us. But this we may know: in trying to minister to the needs of the spirit in the leisure hours we are facing very directly one of the great religious problems of the family.

It is a waste of words to talk about family altars until we can make the home itself a sacred place, more like a church in the sense that here we open our hearts to the best, here we find freedom for all that is of goodness and joy; least like a church in the sense of being dry, stilted, conventional, repressed or gloomy. It is an idle waste of breath to boast of our anxiety and our prayers for our children unless we will give up the evening planned for our ends and convert it to their good. And it is not less a waste of words to preach to them about religion while we let this opportunity of practicing go unused. Here is the only way we can successfully combat the dangers of idle and wasted hours, by offering through the home that which is always more attractive than either loafing or empty amusement, and that is fellowship, freedom, joyous activity and social life.

IN ONE FAMILY

Of one family the neighbors usually say, "All you people seem to be busy all the time, either working hard or playing hard." An inquiry, pursued at some length, revealed a number of interesting facts. Perhaps the most illuminating was the statement that when the parents began

home life they determined to always have on hand some hobby. At first they studied a new language and translated together. Then they took up a definite accomplishment. Later, and for several years, they followed rather stiff courses of reading, designed by an educational institution. Now, when you go into that home, you find that every one is occupied with some definite interest. Leisure is not idle; it is opportunity to turn from one kind of work to another, to one that has a special fascination, one that is taken up in freedom of choice and not under necessity.

The parents found that it was not necessary to require that children should take up these interests, all that was necessary was to have on hand the conveniences and facilities. Given wood-working tools one boy soon found that occupation leading into many lines of investigation. Given plenty of books, books on special subjects as well as general literature, children of their own accord were found starting out on tours of intellectual and social discovery.

Let no one think that this is simply a family of highbrows. For one thing, there is the keenest interest in and participation in physical sports and play by all members. For another, there is an unwritten law that even hobbies are laid aside and studies cease so that the members may enjoy one another in social intercourse. But that family has never had to meet the problem of street-loafing; the leisure hours have been preëmpted in happy, stimulating occupations. Perhaps because the parents have never learned that they were too old to grow, the children have always been engrossed in the means of growth.

HELPFUL READING

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT IN CHILDREN (No. 21 in "American Home Series," Abingdon Press).

DRAMATICS IN THE HOME (No. 22, "American Home Series," Abingdon Press). (See also the references in Chapter on Reading.)

THE MORALITY OF SOCIAL PLEASURES, *M. Fowler* (Longmans). An English essay especially valuable in its discussion of the meaning of the life of human intercourse.

WHAT MEN LIVE BY, *R. C. Cabot* (Houghton, Mifflin). Especially important to get a point of view.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Is this problem peculiar to our modern times?
2. How does the problem vary in different types of communities?
3. What dangers does it present to the educational work of the family?
4. What does home life afford that no other agency can give?
5. Why do children prefer to be outside the family in the evening?
6. Usually what are the dominant factors in determining the program of the family in its leisure?
7. What do parents owe children during the leisure hours?
8. What special forms of training should prepare for better use of leisure?
9. What special physical provision should be made?
10. Describe any cases in which the problem has been solved.

CHAPTER VI

OUTSIDE COMPETITION

Stating the problem: "What chance have we parents to train our children unless we can be with them once in a while? Why, most of my children might as well be away in boarding school for all we see of them. The high-school, their clubs and the church make a complete program for all their spare time. They eat with us occasionally and sleep with us fairly regularly; but that gives very little opportunity for systematic training."

There were a good number of emphatic, assenting nodding heads when this problem was being stated. Apparently we had started a general experience meeting when another person said, "It seems to me that a good deal of the advice given for parents has been held in storage too long; it was prepared for a day that is past, a day when all the family had long periods of leisure, when life was so simple that we could count on spending together most of the time left over from work and school. I can remember how we used to sit around in the evenings when the supper work was done. We cannot do that now; the evening meal must be hurried up because Mary has her club meeting, or John and Jane both have a date or a social engagement, or it may be that every one, including Father and Mother, will be out this evening."

THE SITUATION

Undoubtedly a great change has taken place, one that seems to seriously complicate and intensify the problem of family training. The situation stated by the first speaker is not peculiar to any one family; it is common at least to

all dwelling in cities and villages and, to a large extent, to those in rural districts. We face the fact that family life has been socialized. Once this socialization was confined to schooling and daily work, and then, the day's work done, we passed back into the smaller group organization of the family, and the later part of each day we spent together. We depended upon and developed our own resources for entertainment and improvement; we made our own music, read books, told stories, passed conundrums, simply visited or watched and helped the children in their home studies. Friends came in or we went out and called informally on neighbors; but, on the whole, the evenings and the after-school hours were our own; they were the larger, free opportunities for family education, for the training that such a social life affords.

But, just as we have syndicated the chatty news-letters that our grandmothers used to write into the daily papers, so we have effected a combination of all the family cottage organs into the community orchestra and combined the remnants of the old group-plays and games in the social occasions of the community. Then, just as the restaurants and caterers and delicatessen shops have encroached on home cooking, so have commercial amusements encroached on home programs until we are a people who are too busy following prescribed routines of diversion to have any spontaneous enjoyments and too much occupied with the attentions of hired entertainers to develop any powers of self-entertainment.

IS THERE ANY WAY OUT?

Is the situation hopeless? Does it follow that we will have no home life left except that which discharges the functions of a hotel or a restaurant and a dormitory?

No. First of all, there are still a great many homes where the competition of outside attractions seems to have had little effect, where most of the members spend their time together, and these are often homes with young peo-

ple and children. What is their secret? They refuse to assume that the dominance of the outside program is inevitable. It is true that the tendency of community life is to do together as many things as possible; but there are some things that are not as well done under a syndicate, or under community direction; there are some phases of personal character that need the nurture and the special social experience of the smaller and more personally directed group. Do not let any one taunt you with the sneer that you are an old fogy, fighting against modern progress and trying to halt the tide with your pleas for the good old days. There are some things about those days that no day can dispense with. Just as the schools have begun to discover that the essential thing about education is that it shall furnish definite social experience, so we must realize that no child can grow up strong and right-minded without the social experience of the family group; he needs the home, and no schools, social-centers, movies, clubs, churches or anything else can take its place.

But the case is not yet desperate; *there are many unrealized possibilities* in most families. If the school and the social-center steal our children with their programs we must reclaim them with our programs. There lies the trouble with the home: as a rule it has no program, nor has it ever dreamed of one. It is often a drifting, purposeless institution, except that, normally, meals are programmed. Why not stop long enough to realize that children have organs, other than their stomachs, needs just as important, appetites just as imperative. Why not plan meals for their minds and for their social natures? If we do not is it strange that they go to the public caterers to the mind and the social nature?

SUGGESTIONS ON SOLUTIONS

Programing is possible, and it is neither so formal nor as formidable as it sounds; it simply means a little forethought and a good deal of sympathetic imagination. It may mean

rearranging our personal schedules. It may mean that the house will be less perpetually reposeful, and that the furniture may be occasionally used, and the glacier formation of feminine precisions thrown into violent eruption. But, in time, we get to see that all these things, even Oriental rugs and the sacred what-not in the corner, are but tools to one great purpose, that the family may grow fine and strong men and women. The one great purpose is to make the home stronger than the outside attraction, to make it the place where the young would rather be than anywhere else and where they would rather have their friends come than to go where those friends are.

Next, it is highly important to *preëmpt the coming opportunities* of the home. Within the next few years, the greater part of humanity is likely to have much more leisure. Hours of labor will end earlier; the entire family will have greater margins of free time, time which may be exploited by the commercial amusement agencies, or taken from the home and given wholly to the community, or made the great opportunity to redeem home life. All who have at heart the welfare of society must face the problem and opportunity of this wider margin of leisure. If it is to be lost in dissipation it will do the worker little good; it will do society much harm. We all need to learn the arts of leisure, to cultivate the powers of self-entertainment, to acquire independence of the professional entertainer. Education must be planned for leisure as well as for work. And the way to preëmpt the larger areas of leisure is to claim and use those we now have.

THE RIGHTS OF THE HOME

It is high time to claim the rights of the home. It is a social institution. It has rights at least equal to the school. But society has shown a tendency to regard it as negligible and the schools have often ruthlessly disregarded its rights. Many a child does not reach home before the time for the evening meal, and immediately after it he must

settle down to three hours of home-study. One might suppose he existed only for knowledge-packing industry. School-people and parents need to get together and to realize that they are coöperators. Parents may settle this matter by converting the teachers to see the family as an educational agency with responsibilities for the child's whole life. Between school and home coöperation is impossible so long as they are at loggerheads, and there we will remain until we confer together. In the affairs of the school and in the affairs of the church and every other community institution the home should be represented. And the simplest way to get that representation is to take a hand in the affairs of these institutions as consciously representing the home and the family.

CASES THAT SUGGEST SOLUTIONS

There are families that do not seem to feel outside competition; what can we learn from them. One of the first general impressions is a corrective of the apparent attitude of the last paragraph; we must claim the rights of the home in society, but it has no rights it can claim over children; so far as children are concerned home-life does not win precedence by assertion of its rights nor by any kinds of compulsion or regulation. The testimony of parents is fairly uniform here, that no matter what rules you may make or what principles you may assert children will be drawn where life is richest to them. The problem is twofold: to make life in the family so rich and attractive that it will have greater holding power than all outside, and, at the same time, to develop in children tastes and appetites for the better life that the family has to offer as compared with the designed attractions of the street and of commercial amusement. We may as well save breath spent in lamenting the indifference of children and begin to make family life so different from other life that they will feel they cannot afford to be long absent from it.

Visit the homes where children spend their evenings and you will find two reasons for the fact: the homes minister to the instinctive needs of children, and the parents have tried to cultivate in those children some needs that may not be instinctive, appetites for good music, reading, quietness and the joys of sharing life together.

Another feature of those homes—one that is sometimes distressing to people who think that the home exists, first of all, for the adults, is that the friends of the children are always welcome. No matter how great the love between parents and children, the latter will crave also young lives about them. They attend the school functions because their crowd is there. The most successful home, in relation to this problem, was one where there were always a number of boys working at something; for a season it was making aeroplanes; at another period they were building miniature theater stages, with marionettes; then they were book-binding; then they had a very formal club which met in that home. True, sometimes things were cluttered up; but the boys were there.

But having done all that may be done to resist the encroachments of the outside, competing institutions, and to meet their competition, ought we not to ask ourselves what every merchant will ask himself when competition makes him nervous: Is my business really competent? Here are a few questions to thrash over before we decide to settle this matter with a vote of censure on either society or the schools: Is it really outside competition that keeps these children out of my home evenings? Are they there when that competition is removed? If they are there, what is there for them to do? Why, at bottom, do we want them there? If they were having a good time there, with their friends, what would we do about it? Would we not chide, restrain and dampen their ardor? How much planning do we do for their spare time?

And here are a few subjects for general discussion: Why do children prefer to be out? Which are the really determining factors in the home: parents, guests or chil-

dren? If ever we do plan an evening, whose tastes and needs determine the plan?

HELPFUL READING

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY (Chs. 4, 15, 16), *Cope* (University of Chicago Press). Especially the introduction.

THE COMING GENERATION (pages 60-68, 271, 272), *Forbush* (Appletons). Deals with the many problems of training children and youth in the social and religious life.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In what sense is the word "competition" used here?
2. What are the agencies that compete?
3. What needs do they meet that often are not met by families?
4. Describe the "socialization process" as it works in your community.
5. What is meant by "programming" home-life?
6. What provision ought to be made for probable changes as to increased leisure?
7. Why should the home take precedence of other institutions? Is this true of all homes?
8. What is the basis of the home's right over the child?
9. What needs are most commonly neglected in homes?
10. Describe any solutions of the problems you may have observed.

CHAPTER VII

AMUSEMENTS

Stating the problem: "I am worried over my children's amusements. I want them to have a good time but there is the question of the moral healthfulness of the things they seem to like best and the things that their friends enjoy."

One might describe this as a universal problem in modern life. It presents peculiar difficulties to thoughtful parents. They covet all possible happiness for their children; social custom and commercial enterprise persistently offer happiness in forms that are foreign to our older moral ideals. Some are simply means of nerve dissipation; others frankly stimulate fundamental appetites for which they offer no control; others tend to form habits of slothful, passive pleasure-seeking, and of emotional subjectivity.

Parents realize that the young live in a new day. Does this mean that new moral standards prevail? Are they, forgetting youth's needs, seeking to set on their children the stiff harness of adult life? Is it safe to leave youth to instinct? We know they must have free activity; have we the wisdom to determine what its character should be?

THE ANALYSIS

The problem of modern amusement is perplexing because it is so difficult to distinguish between good and bad. To a large degree our current craze for amusement is simply a disease, a manifestation of nervous abnormality. It is compounded of the perfectly natural and healthy desires for change, relaxation and physical exercise, on one

side, and, on the other, of nervous restlessness, habitual physical twitchings, the high-tension vibrations due to present-day social pressure and strain. It is not easy here to distinguish between healthy tissue and diseased, between the normal and the vicious and unhealthy.

The amusement that consists in an entire change of interest and purposes is not bad in itself; it is, at intervals, necessary, normal and good. *Every human being ought to play;* every one ought to enjoy his play, and it ought to be that form of play which his life needs at its stage of development. Play is simply our effort to find freedom of action, to give ideals reality in experience. Here we drop living under necessity and turn from the parts we play under the mechanism of a working world to assume such parts as we choose: warriors, artists, competitors in struggles that have no aim beyond experience. Every life constantly craves such freedom of action. But all normal appetites have possibilities of abnormality. Here is a normal tendency which has been neglected by those who ought to have seen its high potentialities and has been exploited by those who were quick to realize its commercial possibilities.

Now there seem to stand *two opposing parties* on the so-called amusement question; on one side those who, having failed to make amusement and recreation count for good, declare that it is wholly evil; on the other, those who are determined to develop, control and exploit its possibilities for their profit. Not universally, but too largely, the church says "Amusements are evil"; commerce says they are rich in possibilities of revenue. But youth, standing between, finds them in his range of indispensable desires, and the professional amusement caterers care not whether they are evil or good so long as they bring in good financial returns. But one must not forget the many earnest and intelligent groups who are endeavoring to guide the play and recreative instincts and to make wise provision for them.

The more vehemently the church denounces amusements

in toto the more effectively does she drive young people, and that means nearly every one to-day, into the waiting arms of the commercial exploiter.

The first step is to recognize that *we are dealing with an entirely normal appetite,* one that must be satisfied. Life does press hard on nearly all to-day; relief there must be; the strain must be lessened at times. Every life must have opportunity to enter into some ideal experiences. Somewhere the life must have freedom of action. Somewhere there must be social mingling with our fellows on levels other than those of everyday work. Every day the vital current of interest ought to be switched over into new channels. It cannot rest entirely, but it can be diverted and saved from overstrain. Play and amusement are normal and necessary.

But we are dealing with *a normal appetite under abnormal conditions.* They are: first, the condition of *general overstrain of life.* The higher the civilization the higher the tension. In part, it is the high tension of unusual interests, of great anxieties. But it is also the tension due to the great complexity of life; we are crowding on one another; we depend on one another; we react from one another; the mechanism of ordinary living has become highly complicated; simple living has gone. Much of the complexity may be unnecessary and artificial; but it is here, and it is difficult to escape from it. Its pressure is continuously on all. Children find their days full; young people work through high-pressure schedules of social engagements. Foolish, factitious and faddish our programs may be, no more than surface eruptions of the fever of the age, but each one makes the tension greater, each one brings the nervous system nearer to the breaking point.

The second condition is that of our *newly realized social integration;* the separate life has passed. We live in mobs and we are ministered to in mobs. Amusement is no longer found in quiet individual occupations or in the family group but in the great crowd.

The third condition, producing the problem, is that of

the cultivation of *the crowd instinct,* and the deliberate exploitation of nerve-strain by a class newly conscious of power and opportunity, the amusement caterers. We are in a condition of mind and nerves when normal appetites cannot be trusted. Just as in some diseases the stomach seems to call for precisely the types of food it ought not to have so we, with jaded nerves, call for high-speed, high-spice forms of relaxation, all making yet larger demands on the nerves. Then the pace is speeded up by those who seek to develop the abnormalities of the appetite. It is a good deal like the saloon business all over again, only on a plane and by methods that seem more consonant with the taste of the age. Very skillfully have the amusement caterers thrown a glamour of romance over their business. Some of it runs so close to the æsthetic that they have made us believe that the musical comedy was a piece of histrionic art. Then they have thrown the mist of the unknown, the weird and strange over it; Broadway is a disease in New York, but it is a word to conjure with amongst the ignorant, the young and those who are thirsting for strange experiences.

MEETING THE PROBLEM

What can we do about it? *Everything depends on our attitude.* If it is simply that of denunciation, the case is hopeless; we are beaten before we begin. We never will be able to strip life of the features of play and amusement. Nor are we likely to achieve very much if our attitude is simply that of capitulation, saying, "Oh, well, since young people must have their fling, we'll make the best of it and give them only so much as we can't help giving." A begrudging attitude simply means that the satisfaction of this normal appetite is taken out of our hands and placed in those of others having other motives.

Our concern in the whole question of amusements is not that of making our children do the things we like to do; it is not that of saving them from doing things other than

we used to do; it is not that of fighting changing social customs. We have, or ought to have, a very different purpose, and a very simple one, no other than this, to help them to get the most out of life, the largest, most lasting and satisfying values.

We can see in the amusement problem not so much an enemy to be wiped out as *an opportunity to be developed.* Instincts cannot be eradicated, and the appetites that grow out of them cannot be suppressed. What is more, every instinct offers a channel through which the life may be reached, a means of modulating and guiding conduct. The activity of play is our opportunity to guide conduct, to form habits and develop powers. It is a wonderful opportunity to direct the expression of ideals. Play may become as truly a part of the educative process as anything beside. Not only the play that is directed in gymnasiums and classes; but the opportunity may be even larger in the free play that groups determine for themselves. Every one knows this who has thought about it. In play the powers are released for ideal purposes. In play lives go out into continually changing forms of activity. In play lives learn control and coöperation. Play is full of disciplines; but they are covered and beautified by pleasurable emotion and appealing purposes.

We admit the opportunity that play affords, but we make no adequate provision for it. The family accepts it as an inevitable accident or an incident of childhood, as something they will outgrow, just as they pass beyond measles and mumps. Play often is discouraged as youth comes on. Failing to see its educational advantages, we allow this instinct to be diverted from its free expression in group plays into the passive amusement stage.

There is no reason why the family should not provide as deliberately for play as for food; the whole nature needs one as much as the body needs the other. So long as fathers play with their boys there is little danger in the amusement problem. Youth would always rather act than be acted to or for.

Much of the so-called amusement of youth is simply more highly-organized play. This is evident when we consider the forms of amusement in which they are physically active. Dancing is play. But so also is much of the social life of young people, their parties and social affairs; they are experimentations with life under free conditions, or under ideal rules.

It is not difficult to draw *the line between play and amusement;* play is free, direct social activity, commonly largely physical, under conditions and for ends which are largely ideal. Amusement is passive; the action is not our own; it is the relief or diversion of interest by setting in its focus the real or imaginary experiences of others.

THE DANGERS IN AMUSEMENT

The *passive attitude* constitutes the danger of amusement. Its object is sensation. Its purpose is satisfied to the degree that the spectator gains emotion without real experience. It is likely to have serious effects on the will; the experience of an emotion—often of the most sweeping, compelling character—to which we make no response in will and action, paralyzes the power to respond to emotion and largely inhibits the activity of the will.

The forms of amusement in which *the emotional elements* are definitely organized, as in the drama and the movies, have also elements of danger in the inevitable tendency to meet the demands of drugged emotional natures. A species of intoxication ensues on long continued amusement so that the inner palate loathes common food and demands only that which will be sufficiently stimulating to act as a spur to the jaded appetite.

Another danger lies in the *abnormality of the conditions* of popular amusements. They are tricked out in garish lights, lurid colors and nightmarish forms. In their very setting, as well as in their content, they distort life and present it in false forms.

CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS

Yet amusement has its place. We cannot enter into all life by direct and immediate experience. The man who laughs at the recital of a good story or joke is being amused. The reading of fiction is a form of amusement —and so is going to church, for some people. The elements of instruction are often mixed with the forms of amusement.

What then shall we do? Use both play and amusement; meet the normal appetites of people; develop the fine possibilities in both; make them our allies. Recognize how they meet essential needs. Base our decisions and action on knowledge and not on prejudice or arbitrary rules. Live closer to our children so that we may know not only what they want but why they want this or the other particular form of amusement. How can we help them to discriminate unless we really know both the basis of desire and the exact form of its satisfaction? For example, to say that the "movies" are wholly bad or that they are wholly good is the part of ignorant sloth.

A SUMMARY OF CASE RESULTS *

Help them to solve the problems for themselves. At all times we need to remember that, for growing young people, moral problems are not solved by prohibitions; we should look toward developing in youth the power to will what they know to be right, rather than hope for youth that submits to our regulations. Every problem of amusement is an opportunity for their training through the exercise of the powers of discrimination and will. The best thing we can do for them is to help them discover the guiding principles in regard to every moral question. Few things help more, in this direction, than the free discussion of forms of amusement as they arise. Such discussions

* It has seemed best, in this chapter, to bring together the best suggestions that have come from individual cases rather than to state each case separately.

must not degenerate into mere debates; we must not permit ourselves to make hasty judgments, to pronounce harsh verdicts, not even though we are sure we are right. For our children will need, not our verdicts, but their own purposes, determined by their own judgments, carried out by their own wills.

But we can *help them to form their purposes;* we can help them to see the principles that will guide action. They can be shown that, while amusements must entertain, we never have the right to allow them to weaken or destroy our life powers. They must contribute to health, they must contribute, in some way, to enriching our lives. And we can help them to see that they must not make for our happiness, or our pleasure, at the cost of the happiness or well-being of others.

Discussion is good; but experience is always better. The best way to meet a vicious amusement is with a healthy one. Some parents have little or no problem here simply because they pay the price, in time and thought, of seeing that their children find within the home itself, and in the circle of youth that the home attracts, the satisfaction of every normal desire for pleasure and entertainment, for social mingling and activity. The best way to cultivate an appetite for the things that are good is to feed the life with good things. Many young people are eating, for their social appetites, out of the hog's trough of the commercial amusement promoters simply because when they have asked for bread their parents have offered a stone or a bare board.

Above all we should *provide directly* and in the family life and our own social groups *for the satisfaction of the normal desires* for play and amusement. If no food is on our tables our children must still eat, and we will find them at strange tables or searching in the gutters and the garbage cans. When the home cares more for chairs than for children, when it lives under the fear of furniture, the starved instincts of its young lives will drive them into pool-rooms and dance-halls, amusement-parks and carni-

vals. There is no solution in restriction; it lies in provision. When one looks into many homes to find them destitute of books, limited in music to tattered sheets determined only by the vogue of the street, and repellant to youth by a policy that is based on adult selfishness, it is not strange that we have an amusement problem.

The parents who meet this problem must first ask whether and to what degree they are offering their children normal satisfaction of their play life and their social idealizing tendencies. And the church that denounces popular amusements must first tell us why all her doors are shut six nights of the week while youth tramps the streets and turns into the only places that afford opportunity for social mingling.

HELPFUL READING

CHRISTIANITY AND AMUSEMENTS, *R. H. Edwards* (Association Press). A frank discussion, in a modern spirit, which leads back to fundamental principles.

THE PLAY MOVEMENT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE, *H. S. Curtis* (Macmillan). A valuable survey of the place of play and a guide to its use.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR MEN AND BOYS, *A. M. Chesley* (Association Press). Especially for institutional workers with boys, but will help parents who are puzzled as to forms of play and amusement.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How would you distinguish between play and amusement?
2. What are the special uses of amusement?
3. What current conditions intensify the dangers in amusements?
4. What may be the effect of amusement on the will?
5. Why do older people so commonly condemn amusements usually approved by young people?
6. Consider carefully what the verdict of young people would be on the forms of amusement current forty years ago. What would they think of many of the outdoor round games, especially the kissing games?
7. In what ways may the family use the desire for amusement as a social opportunity?
8. What opportunities are there in your community for healthy amusement?

9. In what ways may churches aid families in this problem?
10. What considerations of health should enter in?
11. What principles should young people be guided to form for themselves?
12. How may they be aided to form their own principles?

CHAPTER VIII

THE DAILY NEWSPAPER

Stating the problem: We were riding down on the morning train together, exchanging fugitive comments across the pages of our papers, when he turned his sheet toward me and said, "What do you think of children reading that sort of stuff?"

He pointed to the kind of sex-sensation to which our daily papers have thoroughly hardened us. It was the usual tawdry mess, garbage-can material treated in alley-scavenger taste, the type of news that once was confined to a few notorious sheets. And yet this is served up almost every morning, in one form or another, in millions of homes where it is eagerly read by children from seven years of age up. While there are a few exceptions, apparently a decreasing number, it is evident that the average morning paper is not prepared for children, nor is it designed for persons of refined tastes. It may be described as cheap, coarse and nasty, specializing in crime, lust and scandal, and usually dependable only to the extent of following some policy of its management. The morning paper is a habit; we do not read it to get the news, because usually we do not seriously believe what it tells us; we read it because we have always read something behind the coffee and on the morning train or car.

THE PROBLEM ANALYZED

But we are not the only ones who read these mental meals tricked out with salacious salad to sell commercial propagandist sheets; the pages are lying around and every child is likely to read anything printed thereon. Is this

a wise procedure? What is the effect of the daily paper on the mind and characters of children? We have passing misgivings on the subject; but it is strange that parents who would exercise great care in purging their library shelves show little interest in the material that appears on the pages of the daily. It is hardly necessary to urge the danger. We are not dealing with the newspaper of our youthful days, conducted by men who were not ashamed of the word "literature," often prepared and edited by men who aspired to write good English and to tell the news. Now it is likely to have no interest in either; it exists to sell a commodity called publicity, and it must spice that commodity up to what its promoters imagine to be the popular taste, a matter upon which they are guided, doubtless, by the familiarity with the half-world and the underworld which appears on every page.

But the young child has none of our cynical familiarity with the mode of the modern newspaper. Print has its charm and authority to him; the paper is, at least for some time, a faithful mirror of life. True, the life it reveals is quite different from the life he knows at first hand, as in the home. But that does not surprise him because he has already settled it that the life he knows intimately is totally different from the big world life. *The newspaper succeeds in shaping his concept of what the real world life is actually like.* It is, thus, in a very potent manner a teacher of the meaning of life. And it becomes a teacher of the value or worth of life, as it pictures a world of men mad for gain, as it reveals base motives operating, and as it seems by its publicity to at least condone, if not reward, the base and selfish; it covertly teaches that life is a base, mean, selfish and sordid affair both as to method and motive.

Do we realize what effective and evil teaching is going on as children day after day learn life through this distorted, lust-clouded mirror?

But the newspaper is more than a mirror; it is a teacher. Adults may regard it with cynical disdain, but children

learn life out of it. In many cities the yellow press is the only available means of constant contact with the outside world. And to every family it comes like the morning milk and the mail. We know it is usually corrupting; we know it distorts life and that to judge humanity through it is worse than studying sociology in a slum or estimating a city by its criminal courts or its appearance from the railroad. The newspaper puts the seamy side out—and yet we cannot do without it. What can parents do about it?

THE NEED

Yet the problem my friend presented is not answered by denouncing the morning scandal-monger. Our children have a right to know what is going on in the world, just as we have. They are being defrauded, just as we are, only in their case it is worse because they do not apply our mature discounts to the news. Shall we, because of the evil of the papers, banish them from our homes? That would be the sensible thing to do. If only some one would start a paper that would condense the news, the real news, into a few columns we could get along very well. We need a daily news digest; at least most people have sense enough to make for themselves the filling that the space-writers pad into the press dispatches, and none of us would be the poorer if we never heard that the famed movie actress had another divorce and another infamous marriage, nor even would we be the poorer if we never knew that Slick Ike had robbed Mrs. Fitzgreen of $50,000 worth—newspaper valuation—of paste and pinchbeck. But we cannot yet get real news in the present-day papers save as it floats, here and there, an island of important fact in an ocean of silly gossip, wave after wave of weak-minded fads and the drifting scum that a beer-hall taste calls "human interest." If the American newspaper, save for a few notable exceptions, really reflects American interests and taste, then, God help us all!

SOME SUGGESTIONS

1. *Taking thought of the situation.* In many families the situation is much worse than is necessary; the daily paper is taken as a matter of course, without thought as to its character and effect on children's minds. It is taken because it is the organ of our political party, or because Father subscribed. Or it may be the one that the children demand because they have become attached to its "Funnies." The simple step would be to discover whether there is a better paper available. Father may have to choose between blind loyalty to his party organ and the good of his children. It may do him good to read the other side.

2. Frequently *the evening papers are less objectionable* than the morning ones; the opposite is sometimes the case, notably in England. But in the larger cities in the United States there is a greater probability of finding at least one clean afternoon paper than of finding a morning paper fit for children to see. If both are taken the better one can be used as the family paper.

3. *Choosing the food for children's minds.* It is worth while considering whether the editor was right who, when confronted with the objections to our dailies replied, "But papers are not printed for children." The answer, "Then why do you run the funnies and the colored supplements?" seemed to stagger him for a moment; then he said, "I notice that the older folks go for those funnies just as fast as children do." But it is well to carry in mind the principle that there are differences between adults and children. Is it necessary for Jane and Mary to have the social page and the sporting page, respectively, propped up before their breakfast plates? Yet it will be difficult to draw a line if Dad finds the paper indispensable to his breakfast.

Children do not need the daily newspaper. It is not essential to their lives until they get to adult years or at least to an age when they can resist its harmful tendencies. All the information needed by childhood and early youth

will be found in much better form, more easily understood, more balanced and comprehensive, in the weekly journals which make it their business to summarize the news.* It is true that these journals omit all reference to local happenings, to scandal, to crime—unless the events are of national importance; in other words they make very much the eliminations we would like to make for the sake of our children.

QUESTIONS OF NECESSITY

If the daily paper is not a necessity for children why do they seek its pages so eagerly. First, because, perverted tastes are easily acquired whenever the material is readily accessible. Second, because the modern editor has capitalized children's interests; by inserting a column prepared for them he ties the paper to the home through their demands. Third, the reading of the daily paper appeals to the imitative tendency of children; it is an adult act which they can easily copy.

Guarding moral health. If the daily paper is not a necessity for children, but, on the contrary, usually a source of danger, how can it be kept from them? To suggest that it should be kept out of the home will seem to be a counsel of perfection. And yet there are many papers that ought never to be permitted in any home having regard for moral health. And it surely ought to be quite clear that, if our first concern is for the moral well-being of children, we would accept the principle that, if the daily paper "causes one of these little ones to stumble," we will have no daily paper at all. There would seem to be no other course where, as is now the case in some of our largest American cities, there is no respectable morning paper. Why admit daily poison and leave it available to all simply because there is a small percentage of food con-

* Such as "The Literary Digest," "The Outlook," "Current Events," and, for more mature persons, especially good as to foreign news and points of view, "The Living Age."

tained in each portion? There are many cases in which the only thing that conscientious parents can do is to go without the local daily and to get their news away from home.

Guiding moral appetite. Even where the paper is less objectionable it is advisable to cultivate the habit of mind in children which will regard the daily paper as an adult affair. This is not possible by prohibitions. It can be accomplished when, first, there is ample provision of suitable, satisfying, journalistic reading for children.* Give them that which is sensibly prepared for them and they will have little appetite for the highly-seasoned adult prints. Second, use reasonable measures to keep the paper in adult hands. It need not be scattered all over the house. One family solved the problem when Mother read the front section at breakfast and Father took it to the office with him; that left the comparatively innocuous second section —advertising, fashions and sports—at home.

The circumstances of the characters of papers and the customs of families are so diverse that no exact directions are possible. But the principal need, and the most helpful step toward solution, lies in the matter of careful parental thought and planning, in an attitude of mind that freely gives at least as much attention to the food for the children's minds as to that for their bodies, and in bountiful provision of good, current reading, easily accessible, for children.

HELPFUL READING

The Children's Reading, *F. J. Olcott* (Houghton, Mifflin). The discussion of the general principles of reading in the child's education is useful; the list of books is one of the best.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the special dangers of daily newspapers for children?
2. Why should children know the news?

* Many high schools publish daily papers. It has been found feasible to condense all the news of any day into two short columns and to publish, early every week-day morning, a digest not only satisfactory to youth but welcomed by adults.

3. What is the effect of giving them every variety of news?
4. Does the newspaper reading give children the true idea of current life?
5. If no good newspapers are obtainable what would you do to give children information?
6. What changes of parental habits would help?
7. What substitutes are possible for children?
8. What home conditions are necessary to make substitutions successful?

CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL STANDARDS

Stating the problem: "We got along very well until we moved into the city and the children began to go to high school; but now our home has to fight against all the standards and ideals that the children see and hear all about them. All that we can say and do seems so little and so powerless against the constant social pressure of their friends."

Many of us feel that our problems would be simple if we could live like Rudolph Wyss' "Swiss Family Robinson" on a desert island where in the making of standards and forming of habits we had no competitors. But, as it is, school and social life subject our children to the constant tutelage of a world whose ideals and practices may be different from our own. This common melting-pot of our American life may throw them with youth from homes where money flows like water and they come back to us discontented, or they struggle to hold the pace with the swift in the spending race. It may make them boon companions of the coarse and degraded whose normal environment is vicious; they may frequently see lives in action apparently devoid of moral principles.

THE SITUATION

Here is a condition from which, on the whole, there is no escape. This is the world in which we live. We will work to make it a better world; but it is the world as our children must live in it. Their present experience is only a part of their total experience which should be that of a constant struggle to realize the higher ideals held within

against the force of the lower standards accepted without. We cannot withdraw our children from the world; we can fortify them against it. We may help them to select social environment; we may train their tastes so that they will not walk in the gutter when there is a sidewalk running close by.

It is a cause for encouragement when this situation is recognized, for there is a problem that lies much deeper, and that is, how can we arouse parents to realize that the characters of children are being determined by the social environment outside the family? Most parents are anxious to shield their children from the contagion of the grossly depraved, especially if the depravity is accompanied by destitution and poverty; they warn Algernon against associating with Mike and Chimmie; but they see no danger from the company of those to whom money, extravagance, display and decorated dissipation are the chief ends of life. We are all concerned about formal schooling; but what about the effective informal schooling of social life?

What is the real concern back of this question of contamination? Is it the fear of what the world terms "vulgar," of rough manners and crude speech? Or is it dread of the corruption of riches, of the deadly paralysis of selfish luxury, of the corroding fever of sensual indulgence? Is it anxiety lest children should acquire the habits that would raise a blush for their ignorance of good form, or is it fear lest they should believe what the great world is ever saying, that life does consist in an abundance of things, that nothing matters so long as you can get away with it, and that only antique fools worry over moral ideals or spiritual purposes?

There lies the real danger. And, in the anxiety that children may succeed they are often forced into social groups where only a thin veneer of "good form" hides the diseased minds and wills; we often endorse the success that has cost the soul. Can we wonder if they are led to false standards of life when we have no better sense of its real values? God pity the heartless parents who are so blindly

eager for their children's social promotion that they care not at all for the safety and happiness of their inner lives!

SUGGESTIONS ON SOLUTIONS

But, taken for granted that we realize these dangers, the problem, then, simmers down to this: *in what ways may we make the higher ideals held in the home effective against the lower standards prevailing outside?* And here one mistake often occurs: it is not alone a choice between standards within and those without; it is a choice between standards and ideals that lead us up and those that drag us down. It may often be that we will find outside the home forces for the high ideals that must be called to our aid. Perhaps this is one of the first things to do, to help children find every stimulating, elevating influence in all life. There are good men and women; there are good homes; there are sources of inspiration and strength all about us.

First, *realize on all our allies.* To make the best standards effective discover them, discover those who hold them, where they are revealed, where they are most deeply felt and clearly seen. Know the life about you, the homes and scenes into which your youth are likely to go. Test and select their environment. Summon all possible tact and skill to see that they for themselves desire the places that are desirable. Fill their programs with the healthily happy, with all that is strong and attractive for goodness. Make plain paths for their feet so that they may readily walk where high standards are set up, where noble souls are and where the richest, lasting values of life may be found.

This is the opposite to a program of negation. It has neither time nor need to say, "Do not go there"; it opens the doors to the better ways. It works to establish the friendships that enrich. It fills the free hours with occupations, social intercourse, mental and spiritual enjoyments that make their own high standards. It involves much thought; it means devoting ourselves largely to this pur-

pose. It requires forethought, definite planning and all the patience and tact we have.

POSITIVE AIDS

On the other side, there is not less need to carefully *foster the highest ideals within the home.* And this is not as simple as some parents seem to suppose. They come with their questions, hoping that one can recommend a book, a collection of wise precepts which they may purchase, put in the child's hands and have done with worrying over the matter. But ideals are not taught; they are caught. They cannot be formally imparted; they are acquired through unconscious contagion and absorption. They become effective with our children only as they are constantly effective with us.

The home can combat the world without only as it is a mightier world in itself. If it is an experience of living in a social group that is habitually and constantly controlled by high purposes then no preaching is needed to make those purposes the dominating ones for all who live in that home. One cannot state too often the principle that children learn most by what they experience. It is the very heart of the teaching power of home life. We are all looking for text-books when what we must develop is a social experience of the way of goodness and truth, the religious way of life. The standards of the home are simply just what that home life really is. What children do about life is usually a revelation of what parents think about it.

The healthy, vigorous life may often pass unscathed through the plague. It is wonderful how much evil children do not see simply because their hearts are fortified by the normality of the good. Do not talk about standards; exhibit them in action and application. Your *daily living will be the child's real text-book.*

Then it is possible to saturate their lives with the feeling of high purpose and ideals in many other ways. *Create and maintain a rich environment* for thought and feeling.

See that the tables on which the food for the soul is set are always filled. Good books, good pictures, fine music, helpful friends and happy occupations—these we owe them at least as evidently as we owe them bread. Fill the fodder-racks with good food and there will be no need to teach them how to use it.

Do not worry about their understanding of virtue; help them to find strength and joy in its ways. Too much of our teaching of the moral life is as though we were to insist on children learning all the facts of calories and vitamines, of digestion and dietetics with every meal. It is not the analysis of virtue they need but its power and habits. Their ideals, their standards, the ideas by which they will live will come to them, as strength from food, if only they have, for the inner life, its strengthening daily food.

The effective standards of life are formed within; they rise out of our own experiences. Therefore we must help these children to *experience living for high ends.* We can give them opportunities to taste the joys of the way of service, the happiness of sacrifice, the strength of self-denial, the thrill of self-control. Give them also, choice of action, the chance to take the highway for themselves.

Do not be ashamed of ideals. Talk freely, as about other things, of the great issues of life. The social struggles of the hour have at their heart the question of the standards by which men live. What do we indicate, by our after-newspaper chat, as the controlling motives for life? How eager these youngsters are to know the inner meaning of the labor struggle, of the great political issues! This is life in action. What a chance it is for us to show its real meaning!

The test of our ability to combat lower standards lies in the manner in which we meet such questions as these: By what standards do you advise them to choose an occupation? By what standards to choose friends? What are the standards of dress? Who determines these? How do you judge success in life when talking with them? Who

are the most successful men and women in your circle of acquaintances? What are the best homes?

Stimulate children to form their own standards. They are very conventional, and they must be helped toward independent judgment, helped to escape from the slavery of current modes. They can learn to think for themselves; but they need our aid in discovering the principles and tests by which conduct must be judged. While they are young they are much more likely to be willing to accept ideal standards of values, more likely to see that it is worth while to live for higher purposes than those which govern the current age. This is the time to show them what the Christian way of life really means, that it is taking life in terms of its lasting, spiritual values, finding joy in life as the way of character, of helpful service, of loving goodwill to all men, as living for and judging life, not by what we can gain from others, but by what we can become in ourselves and what we can help others to find of joy and strength in life.

SUCCESSFUL CASES

Perhaps the best way to study cases in which parents have successfully led their children to accept worthy standards is by discovering instances for ourselves; do we know families where younger members, as they have grown up, have definitely committed themselves to life-purposes which show that they accept standards higher than the current ones of to-day? In such families we shall find many experiences in common; we shall find that they, the parents, had their many periods of profound discouragement; that at least one of them, often both, were fundamentally controlled by unselfish purposes; that success in that household never was judged by property scales. We also find, in many such cases, that the parents enjoyed their ideal life, they found evident pleasure in choosing and following the standards of spiritual values, that they enjoyed ideal books and the biographies of those who despised the

passing rewards of things, and that their ideals and those in these books found their way into the minds of the children.

One parent related the effect of a particular book on one of his boys; it was an account of men and women who had devoted themselves to toilsome public service. It came into the hands of that boy when he was about seventeen, and it led him to a fixed purpose of similar, unselfish devotion; it changed all his standards by establishing a life-purpose by which he could judge the worth or value of everything beside.

In other cases similar experiences have been discovered; parents have solved the entire problem of standards by helping children to *find worthy, controlling purposes* in life.

HELPFUL READING

WHAT MEN LIVE BY, *Richard C. Cabot* (Houghton, Mifflin). The motives and sustaining, inspiring experiences that make the realities of life and make them worth while.

THE CORNER-STONE OF EDUCATION, *Edward Lyttelton* (Putnams). An excellent, interesting study of how parental attitudes determine the social attitudes of children.

THE AMERICAN GIRL AND HER COMMUNITY, *Margaret Slattery* (Houghton, Mifflin). Good for both girls and mothers, showing types in their environment.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the serious social dangers to which children are exposed?
2. What would you say as to the relative effects on character of the school and of social environment?
3. What are the prevalent ideals of life which we most need to fear?
4. How do children establish standards of life?
5. How do children get ideals from parents?
6. What is the most effective teaching method of the home?
7. In what ways may we secure the help of other homes?
8. What ought we to be able to secure from the churches?
9. What is the relation of purpose in life to its standards?

CHAPTER X

STREET MANNERS

Stating the problem: One could, perhaps, detect a covert sneer on some faces when a gentle little woman stated her problem: "In our home we like to have things neat and clean, and sometimes it becomes almost unbearable to have to fight against dirt, disorder, noisy actions and loud speech. It seems as though the manners of the street were invading the home."

A stranger might have made a ridiculous picture from that pathetic appeal; he might have described the trim, doll-house type of home, where the chairs are always in the same place, mirrored in the polished floor, where the good man has to take off his shoes and put slippers on his feet when he gets home at night. He might pity the children and wonder why Providence permits them to enter such an old-maid's paradise. But the stranger would have thought differently had he known the real home; the speaker was not lacking in sympathy for child-life and any youngster in her home might well count himself fortunate.

THE SITUATION

After a few moments of silence, as though others dreaded to take chances on this problem, questions were asked and it soon became evident that here is a real difficulty, that the home has a responsibility in the matter of manners, and that, if it is to train right-living children, it cannot permit the street to determine its standards.

Manners and morals. It is a good thing to realize how close is the connection between morals and manners. We sneer at the word etiquette; our American pride of free-

dom and our dislike of conventions may easily lead us to neglect an important element in a child's training. Good manners are much more than the small change of our social currency; often they are the efficiencies of human intercourse; they are part of one's training in exact, scientific living; they are the debt we owe in consideration of others; they are the evidences of social self-respect.

Manners and religion. Religious training can never be separated from training in good manners, for religious training is training to live a religious life, and that is a life of consideration for others, of gentleness, of love of the good, the true and the helpful; it is training to live the kind of life that others delight to know and live with. It is learning how to live and how to be fit to live with. Gentle manners are no small part of that splendid art, the fine art of living with others.

Chairs and children. The problem in the family is not that rough and careless manners mar its furniture, disturb its peace and annoy the parents. We have to learn that chairs exist for the sake of children primarily, that to conduct the home on the hush-hear-a-pin-drop plan is one of the quickest ways to drive children out on the streets. The problem is much more difficult: how can we give the activity, the spontaneity of childhood and the exuberance of youth its opportunity while still teaching, through the experience of family living, consideration for others and that gentle courtesy that distills pleasure on every side?

CAUSES OF DIFFICULTY

1. Some are unavoidable, such as the volcanic characteristics of childhood, the joy in noise, keen sense of rivalry, love of combat, and the tendency to resist any restraints.

2. Other causes are remediable, but with difficulty, such as, undisciplined school-life establishing bad habits; over-disciplined school-life leading to the necessity for the expression of repressed feelings; the rattle and confusion of city life; association with children from homes destitute

of all discipline; the social tone and precepts in public prints and pictures inciting children to pranks; the example of other homes; the immediate proximity of a noisy street; the presence of dirt and noise or lack of light about the building.

3. There is a group of causes which we can immediately reach: our own manners; indifference as to the appearance of things; careless disposition of furniture and personal belongings; failure to provide positive elements of beauty; numerous and meaningless rules; immediate or occasional chiding, scolding and reproof instead of the maintenance of standards.

SUGGESTIONS TOWARD IMPROVEMENT

1. *Make full allowances for the necessities of childhood and youth.* Distinguish between their exuberance and that indifference to the rights and happiness of others which lies at the base of all bad manners. Do not expect your children to keep time to the soft cadence of the old mantel clock; they are set to another *tempo,* and you may be thankful that they are not of the anemic type. There is a healthy meaning in their unwillingness to conform to desirable social customs. Youth is almost sure to assert independence, and, often, they fear lest they should become like the pulseless, pussy-footed, pharasaic peddlers of polite phrases whom they so naturally and heartily despise.

Outside the family much may be done. Every child should have ample opportunity to open up his exhausts. Between school and the inner home life there should be the free period when vitality expresses itself in large and vigorous action. If you have no safety-valves you are sure to have explosions at inconvenient times.

2. *Discover a real basis for all training in manners.* We will need something more fundamental than the purpose of getting our children to act according to prevailing fashions of conduct, and something that goes deeper than a desire for order and quietness in the home. Training in good man-

ners must be no other than *training in the social life,* in conduct that is determined by the common good. A truly socially-motivated life is a well-mannered life. True, we have known some excellent social prophets who were not the most desirable companions; many are so consumed with the passion to get justice for others in large matters they forget to do justice to others in small matters. But one cannot forget the picture of Jesus; what a clear view most of us have of the gentleness and unfailing courtesy of that life of strength and love! In that life lies the great motive of good manners; they are but one way of giving ourselves, our best selves, to the world. Consideration for others, the purpose to coöperate with them and the recognition of the real worth of every other person lies at the root of all gentleness of action, of all true codes of conduct.

3. Here, as elsewhere, *the two great influences are ideals and examples.* What are the manners of the people we praise? What sort of living ideals do we endorse? Do we recognize and approve the pleasures of the life of kindly courtesy? And what sort of ideals of conduct do we exhibit? Do we imagine children cannot note any difference between company manners and home manners? Do we reserve our "best for the stranger guest"? Are manners merely a social asset with us or are they the customary currency of a kind life?

4. *Instruction.* Children need definite instruction in the right courses of conduct. So simple a matter as table manners must be taught. Much of the teaching will be by actual experience. The only way we can be sure our children will not disgrace us, as mothers say, when they go out, is by seeing that they have the same experiences steadily at our table that they will have when they go out.

5. *What shall we do when breaches of good manners occur in the family?* (a) Treat bad manners with good manners; treat discourtesy, even from our children, with real courtesy? If it is commonly rude to reprove in public it is scarcely less so, and commonly ineffective, to reprove in the little group at home. Sometimes we must do so at

least to the extent of requiring immediate amendment of conduct; but that can be done with courtesy.

(b) Even boisterous conduct does not call for volcanic censure. One loud noise may drown another, but it also swells its volume. Irritating censures at every offence are likely to make manners seem to be a matter of petty prescriptions rather than one of great principles.

(c) Courtesy, like charity, begins at home. If we would train gentlemen they will be gentle, first, to sisters and brothers, to mother and father. The only effective education in manners is a constant experience of good manners.

6. *Parents should know something* about the moral conditions and the kind of social training that *the life of the school affords.* We are seriously handicapped if we must set our few hours of family intercourse against the hours of the school's experience. Some, especially larger high schools, are simply gigantic human factories where, often, teachers assume no responsibilities except for formal instruction and where youth runs wild. We must insist on the educational purpose of schools, as over against the merely instructional end; we must insist on the life product as the most important one. It is little profit to us if our children learn all about the life of the past and know not at all how to live the life of the present. If the school does not train in right social living it is not an educational institution.

7. If training in the right life comes through directed experience in living we ought to know just what sort of experience our children are getting *in other homes* and in all their social experience outside their own homes. What do they learn amongst their friends? How strong is the influence of one boy over another! How easy it is to trace the transfer of forms of conduct! Back of all conduct are social springs; in the hearts of all rise our actions.

8. *Keep the fundamental motives in mind.* How do we make children feel about life? What motives do we help them to find? How do we test conduct when it is called into question; by rules or by purposes and ideals? Do you

see any connection between prayer and good manners? Would an appreciation of the great poetic Psalms be likely to have any effect on social conduct? How can we get children to see the social implications of their actions?

A STUDY OF CASES

Again, it will be found helpful, instead of attempting here the analysis of a family situation in which this problem has been met and solved, if the student will consider any cases which come under his observation, cases in which the manners of children or of all the members of the family have shown improvement. Try to observe the following points:

Was the problem due to congestion, to a crowded family life?

Was the problem most acute when children were all young, when there were older and younger members mixed, or as all grew older?

Did the parents set up rules, or fixed regulations of conduct? If so, did these rules have any beneficial effect?

Did any particular outside, personal influence enter in? If so, of what character and with what effects?

What relations, if any, seem to exist between physical order in the home and manners in the family?

Is there any noticeable connection between the health of members of a family and this problem?

In families where gentle manners prevail do you find any marked pride of family, of its traditions, history and personages?

Do they have "grace" at table? If so, does it have any relation to table manners?

Do the parents take any special interest in the study of child-nature and nurture?

HELPFUL READING

Good Morals and Gentle Manners, *A. C. Gow* (American Book Company). One of the older books, dealing with specific instances; will help parents to some fundamental principles.

Boys, Girls and Manners, *Florence Hall* (Dana, Estes). A good book for girls to read as an introduction to the customs of good society.

Ethics for Children, *E. L. Cabot* (Houghton, Mifflin Co.). One of the best books for teachers and parents. Its method and the stories and material it uses will be found helpful.

Essentials of Character, *E. O. Sisson* (Macmillan). Chapter VIII will be especially helpful.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why are good manners important?
2. State the differences between the good manners of children and the good manners of adults.
3. What are the social bases of good manners?
4. What are the dangers of insistence on forms and rules?
5. What conditions of home life will work against good manners?
6. How can you preserve children's initiative and still secure social conformity?
7. What is best to do in actual causes of ill-mannerly behavior?
8. What aid have we the right to expect from schools?
9. What do you think of the common theory that healthy children cannot be expected to be well-behaved?

CHAPTER XI

THE PROBLEM OF "BAD LANGUAGE"

Stating the problem: "I find my children, even the younger ones, using words that we used to think were never used except by the profane and blasphemous; they seem to imagine that it is a mark of smartness. They not only throw in, with apparent delight, the expletives of a mule-driver; but they apparently regard it as right and necessary to use religious words lightly and often to treat the name of God as a joke."

THE PROBLEM

When that statement was made and set before a group as a problem in the religious training of children every one present seemed to be meeting the same difficulty; others told of well-trained children, children of good habits and dispositions, who were apparently reverent in their general attitudes, who were acquiring the habit of profanity as a normal part of everyday conversation. All this accords with general observation. It is difficult to escape the conviction that we are in an epidemic of the saturation of our language with the terms of the frontier and the army camp.

Even staid men and women take delight in asserting a reckless freedom in language; they roll a round oath with relish. They try to light up a tame joke with lurid words. Even preachers have not been free from this growing habit; is it strange, then, that the younger generation revel in it? Oaths abound; adjectives of biblical flavor and Elizabethan currency have their vogue in all circles. It is difficult to describe what is going on. One hesitates to speak of "oaths and cursing," because there is nothing of barbarous passion in this current habit. One hesitates to call it profanity, be-

cause there is no purpose of irreverence and seldom any hostility to religion. It is only a new verbal vogue, or a recrudescent slang. It is somewhat difficult, too, because when we come to think about it, there is, at most, only a very vague line of difference between the modern habit and a tendency with which all have been familiar for a long time toward carelessness of speech and especially toward weird applications of strange or striking adjectives. We think it no wrong to say that a man is "a holy terror," though what that precisely means it would be hard to say. And surely some parlor language is as reprehensible as many an expletive, for example, when a young woman declared that she had "a sacred passion for cold mutton."

If one attempts to get at the situation more exactly it is found that the tendency lies, in this wave of rude speech, largely toward the free use of words which have been regarded as taboo in religious and cultured society. The language of the day is not less decent in the sense of carelessness in regard to essentially moral ideals. It is not unchaste; it seems to be simply irreverent, and it sounds especially so to those who have always regarded certain expletives as oaths and to those who have regarded the names of the Deity with reverence.

THE POINT OF VIEW

1. It would be unwise to label these words as profanity; that would be to assert that some words are in themselves sacred and others are profane. It would have the effect of attempting an arbitrary classification and of rendering a verdict on words solely on the ground of traditional association. Discrimination is necessary. An act is profane as far as it robs of value that which is sacred to us, sacred because of associations and values. The youth who coarsely embroiders his phrases with oaths and words of cursing is not always consciously deriding anything sacred. Of course he is careless, or he is carefully imitating an unworthy

model. If you tell him he is profane you must tell him what you mean by that.

2. We must *have some standard or means of discrimination.* A word is bad when its associations, or its definite meanings, are indecent. A word is bad when it expresses a bad purpose. For example, either calmly or in heat, to tell another to go to hell is surely assuming too much; it is surely, if we mean it, more than we ought to mean. A word is bad when it is used so as to rob it of its rightful association; if you use "God" as a Parisian does you have lost a wonderful word and you will have to find another name for the God who is our great and loving Father. A word is bad when it is only the vocal explosion of a passion that should be controlled.

3. *Realize the present situation as abnormal.* At least two tendencies seem to be at work. (1) A large amount of current profanity is being carried back into normal life from the abnormal life of the army. Large numbers of men associated under rough conditions, organized for essentially brutal purposes, idealizing the hardships, crudities and barbarity of their life, amongst whom the toughest, the one with the fighter's qualities, is likely to be the hero, accepting army traditions as sacred, have come back to normal life feeling they must mark themselves with the social customs of that abnormal life. Besides any such conscious tendency there is the fact that certain habits of speech are acquired in that school where they have been pupils.

(2) The other element is that of our habit of slang. Some kind of slang is common to all complex languages; but our nervous age is so anxious to cut corners, to save time, that, since one slang phrase often tells as much as a paragraph, we tend to have a language not of flexible words built up to express ideas, but of phrase ideographs, in which conversation consists of a series of arbitrary catchwords. They are tongue-tied who do not use the fad terms. The generous use of expletives always follows, as these serve to express emotions just as slang expresses situations.

DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM

There are some methods that do not deal with it. To assert that certain words are taboo carries no conviction to young people. It is a good deal better to speak of Hell, if you must, than to attempt to deroute yourself around by speaking "of a place that is never mentioned in good society." It is better to give the devil his name than to talk about "his satanic majesty." So far as this group of words is concerned the trouble lies not with them as words but with the waste of our good language in their wrong, foolish and usually pointless current use.

1. *Keep calm.* It does shock those of us who are older to hear oaths on youthful lips; but slang is often just as shocking to those who associate words with ideas. But an exhibition of the shock will not help because youth rather expects to shock age by bizarre acts and unexpected utterances. Your shock may be accepted as a compliment. They like to do the unusual things, and they cultivate unusual language just as they affect unusual clothes.

2. *Be reasonable.* Many may not agree, but good usage and high traditions lead us to believe that there is a proper use for certain bristling words. They are too strong for everyday use; they lose all significance under frequent careless and inappropriate use; may we not make young people see the good sense and decency of a conservation of language?

3. *Count on reverence.* But there are words which deserve our reverent use. Home and Mother and Father and Love are such words. So also are God and Jesus and Lord. We reverence them for their associations. When young people carelessly use these words it is time to ask them what they would do if they heard some one using their Mother's name in ridicule or lightly. Help them to see how they are thus slighting ideas and associations, how they are really deriding what is most sacred and valuable to others. Usually they have no desire to hurt the feelings of others; they speak without thought, for they have caught

a current verbal infection. Young people are sufficiently idealists to be willing to treat with reverence the values associated with words when once they see how close the association is.

4. *Appeal to pride.* Most of the young people we have to train are quite anxious not to be considered fools. We can help them to see that the current profanity is the mark of a fool, of one whose ideas are so vague or whose command of language is so limited that he is obliged to fall back on a series of catchwords, or word-symbols, of words that are expressive in sound rather than in sense. When, for example, every kind of game is described with one single word it shows that the boy who uses it either lacks sense to discriminate amongst the games he is trying to describe or he is too lazy to think out really descriptive phrases. The mind that cannot function falls back on street-record sounds.

Profanity is evidence of an illy-furnished mind, lacking in vocabulary, of an untrained mind, lacking the ability to use the fine tools of a language. It is the promise of a torpid, depreciating mind, lacking the necessary exercise of thought that underlies good, discriminating conversation.

5. *Call on reason.* Sometimes it will help if, when you hear profanity, without chiding, you will ask for a fuller explanation; insist on getting some more exact phrase; make the youngster exercise his vocabulary. Then, without lecturing, it may be possible to help him to see that he is only imitating those who are weaker and inferior to himself. If a joke is so poor that it cannot raise a laugh unless it is aided by vulgar words it is too poor to retell. If a situation is so indefinite that only an expletive can describe it we must exercise our minds to make it more definite.

6. *Reveal dangers.* Help children to see that speaking is like every other act; it is a revelation of ourselves, of our powers, our qualities and our ideals, and it is also a projection of ourselves on other lives. Perhaps by the first consideration we may make them ashamed of this current vogue, ashamed of being verbal paupers, indefinite thinkers,

mere parrot-repeaters of catch phrases. One young fellow was helped to break himself of this bad habit by being brought to realize that it was a bad habit, a mental rut, and then being faced by the picture of his mortification when the habit asserted itself in the hearing of good company. His self-esteem was touched. He really dreaded lest "a bad break" should utterly mar his reputation or become a menace to his business success.

7. *The social motive.* None of us speaketh to himself. No words are without social relations. They teach others; they wound or feed others. One has a social obligation to watch words. One has no more right to throw out on the world unpleasant words, tainted words, foul words, than to spread disease or to throw filth into the highways. Words are wide responsibilities, and no one has a right to do just what he will with them. But he has a duty to use this power of speech both to give out the best that is in him and to make the thoughts of others pleasant and helpful.

8. *Shall we punish* children for bad language? That all depends on what punishment means in the family. Certainly they must learn that there is a difference between the good and the bad, and that it does make a difference to them as to which they choose. One might well refuse to listen to any statement until it was expressed in words fit to hear. One might—and this is usually very effective—gently ask to have the statement repeated until it has been properly expressed. Sometimes the particular offensive word or phrase can be taken and accepted literally, allowing the consequences to fall on the speaker. One father succeeded with the risky experiment of shocking his children with their own language. In every case one purpose must prevail, to help them realize the effect of words, how they work, how they reveal the speaker and his thoughts or lack of thoughts, and how long-lived and far-reaching they are.

There are times to call a halt, to simply stop the mouth that is running away with itself. But at all times remember that what is needed with children and young people is not the establishment of certain laws which they are forced to

obey, but the establishment within themselves of certain purposes and ideals which they will follow. A list of taboo words may be observed scrupulously so long as our ears are within range; but the young person needs a monitor he carries within himself. He will not be willing to lose his powers, he will not be willing to be marked as a fool, and he will not, usually, do what he knows will wound and wrong others. We must try to put this matter on a sensible basis, to help them to understand the life-value of a good vocabulary and of the power to use it with discrimination and social responsibility.

And, again, our own example is the first and greatest force. Do we carelessly follow the easy way of using our pet phrases instead of good sentences? If we lazily perpetuate our own forms of slang we must not be surprised if they follow the habits of their day. Some of our adult, current words are no better than the ones that youth now uses. And, on a wider basis, what is our daily conversation? Is it always the attempt to find the best words? Do we treat words of reverent associations with reverence? May not the careless use of high phrases and great names in religious exercises rob them of the significance that is the basis of reverence? Many prayers abound in irreverent language. A careless grace at table may be profane.

HELPFUL READING

Boyology, *H. W. Gibson* (Association Press). On the problem of vulgar phrases Ch. IX is very helpful; also a brief treatment of slang on pages 46-51.

Problems of Boyhood, *F. W. Johnson* (University of Chicago Press). Chapters VIII & IX deal with the problems discussed above.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How would you discriminate between good and bad words?
2. Is there any difference to-day in social custom in this respect?
3. To what extent do children have meaning in bad words?
4. Where do children learn bad language?
5. Just what do we mean by "profanity"?

6. What authority or rights have parents as to children's speech?
7. What steps of procedure suggested in this chapter are likely to be helpful?
8. What kinds of reading are likely to be most helpful?
9. Would you punish a child for profanity? If so in what ways?
10. In what ways is the social motive suggested as an aid?

CHAPTER XII

BICKERING

Stating the problem: "I wonder whether any one else has our trouble; two of my younger girls seem to spend their entire time in bickering, backbiting, and unending testy arguments."

The speaker had at least one consolation, an assurance that her experience was by no means singular; few families could claim exemption. Why do children, especially those of from twelve to about sixteen years of age, delight in social conflict, in verbal spats and acid rejoinders? The habit, besides constantly irritating those who must listen, tends to become fixed or, at least, to color their dispositions. Carried to extremes bickering sets up attitudes of fixed opposition; each child sees in the other an opponent; each one knows that the other will be set against whatever he, or she, may say, do, or propose. Sometimes the contest waxes exceedingly bitter; cruel and biting phrases are flung vindictively; carried away with the passion for victory, hatred takes the place of natural affection for a time.

CAUSES

An Englishman, writing recently on Americans, suggested that adults are commonly courteous and affable in the United States because children are permitted to work out all their bad humors, their cross-grained pugnacity and their querulousness in their early years. Alas, bad habits do not work themselves out by expression; they tend to bore themselves in and become fixed. If a habit is bad it will not do to think that the child will get it out of his system by

letting it run its course. And yet we need something of the Englishman's attitude toward certain of these problems; a sense of humor will help. Children's outbreaks of combativeness are bad, but they are not fatal.

There are at least three causes in the nature and experience of a growing young person for what we call bickering; any one or all of them may be operative in a particular experience.

1. *The imitative instinct.* Children's conflicts may only reflect parental attitudes. Or they may see other adults enjoying verbal and volitional battles. Adults often first realize how their own tones and phrases of conflict sound when they hear them on the lips of their children.

2. *The experience instinct.* All growing animals tend to try out their powers. The child is experimenting to discover his powers in the realms of consciousness, in thought, in power over the feelings and over the wills of others. The verbal battle that seems so bitter may mean no more than the wrestling of a pair of boys who would by no means do one another any harm but who are each seeking to measure his strength against the other. Boys can take this out in wrestling, while girls are often limited to words.

There comes a time in a child's life when she discovers that words are instruments. Ofter bickering battles are principally contests in the formation of forcible, sharpened phrases.

3. *The volitional struggle.* Every normal child is developing, by use, the powers of will. Where several wills develop side by side there are sure to be conflicts. The mushrooms in the meadow never seem to quarrel.

REMEDIES

Practically all remedies can be set in a single phrase: children must be taught to practice the life of social cooperation instead of that of social conflict.

1. *Teaching by example.* This meets the first cause mentioned above. Bickering parents do have bickering chil-

dren, through environment and not through heredity. Co-operating parents will have coöperating children. Where parents live harmoniously—with all the effort, consideration, sympathy and discipline that this involves—children are afforded more than examples to copy, they are given a social environment, a constant experience of living in a loving society.

2. *Training by experience.* Often the attempt is made to cure bickering by separating children, forbidding them to speak together or to live a common life. This may be effective in extreme cases simply to demonstrate to them the inevitable consequences of anti-social self-assertion. It may help them to realize how impossible life would be under the motives to which they have been yielding. But it does not furnish a cure. That can come only through the experience of the greater joys that come through co-operation, through agreement in harmonious action. It is necessary to plan forms of coöperation which these querulous children can carry forward and to aid them in working them out. Family life and the duties of the home are the natural field for this sort of action. But it is well to go beyond this small circle, to help them to coöperative experiences with larger groups. Often they forget their differences in the wider social life.

When wordy differences arise think out working agreements. Do not always immediately institute them; wait your time. Sow the seed of a project; stimulate them to discuss and plan it together; sit in at the council informally so as to help steer through the verbal reefs of diverse opinions. Help them to keep the end in view, to hold to the project and purpose so that its attractiveness may draw them on when difficulties arise. Do not despair if the results are not up to your expectations or if the old trouble breaks out. You are using the most effective method; nothing teaches social agreement better than the experience of social coöperation. Keep on, remembering that these new habits establish themselves slowly.

3. *Help them to control their developing powers.* This

control will develop in the experience just suggested. But you can help by making it rational and conscious. A child can learn that it is just as much a victory of his will not to quarrel as it is to win against the will of another. This can be made clear to him in a quiet talk, never by scolding, seldom by reproving in the presence of others. But the experience of self-conquest is the real teacher.

An illustration of both the above points: Three children were engaged in a seemingly endless verbal guerrilla warfare one evening. The mother suggested a game of anagrams with her, arranging for a plan of score points. Here was a contest which soon grew exciting so that, before long, the entire family and some young guests were also drawn in. But it was a contest in which all discovered that social coöperation was necessary. When those who were formerly fighting began to argue over words other contestants made it clear to them that it was impossible to play the game without social agreements; each one must take his turn; each one must be silent at times and each must yield his individual judgment to that of the group. The bickering three were swept on together in a social experience, and they were conscious of the wisdom and necessity of agreement.

4. *Cultivate social insight,* that is, a sympathetic understanding of the experience of others and of the effects of our lives on others. This develops through experience. But it can be aided by quiet, kindly talks. One can help children to realize the effects of their stinging words. One can suggest courteous forms and the custom of showing the same deference to those of our own home circle as we show the stranger guest. Such direct teaching comes informally; but it must be given intentionally. Children look to us for guidance. They have a right to the benefit of such lessons as we have learned. Moral training does not come from lectures about moral conduct; yet we must be their instructors. It is much easier than we usually think to find the right mode, provided we are living naturally with them. With each one we can find opportunity for a

quiet conversation in which some recent quarrel is patiently, sympathetically reviewed.

5. *Seek to develop purposes that insure coöperative action.* Children work together just as readily as they argue separately. The way to a common point of view lies through the working at a common purpose. In one family where this problem seemed to be especially acute the parents testify that, after a while, they made it an unpublished rule always to suggest, as quietly as possible, some enterprise or activity when the trouble began to break out. When jangling voices arose and the young contestants were beginning to enjoy the fray they found their attention diverted to some task, some pleasurable activity or some enterprise, or even a new problem that called for practical consideration. Then, as they faced this new interest together, and, as it called out their powers, they found that these other members of the family, with whom they had been disputing, became valuable coöperators. Unity came out of a common aim.

This seems to be the usual rule; no amount of scolding will stop bickering; argument only adds another factor to the confusion. But, often suddenly, as soon as there appears some particular object of interest, some purpose on which energy may be directed, the quiet of concentrated, united effort is likely to succeed. This is the experience of teachers of children. Where the project method of teaching is followed the problems of discipline disappear. Why should not the project method work equally well in the family? Of course there is a larger benefit in this than the cessation of conflict; there is the fact that in working together children learn how to do things; they learn to live together and they form controlling purposes, habits of purpose which dominate the life.

HELPFUL READING

The Problems of Temper (No. 12 in "American Home Series," Abingdon). A brief discussion of the problem especially as to young children.

Sons and Daughters, *S. M. Gruenberg* (Holt). Includes a section on "Children's Pugnacity."

Childhood and Character, *H. Hartshorne* (Pilgrim Press). One of the best books on the development of Christian social motives in children.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What advantages are there in the difficulties discussed?
2. Discuss the theory given by the Englishman.
3. What instincts cause this difficulty, and how do they work?
4. Show the difference between the tendency in children and the tendency in adults.
5. What kinds of control ought to be developed to meet the situation?
6. How many examples help?
7. What special methods may be used with older children?
8. What consequent forms of punishment will help?
9. How can you organize diversions?
10. What does the project method mean, and how does it work here?

CHAPTER XIII

WHEN IS A LIE NOT A LIE?

Stating the problem: When a mother says that her child has never told a lie her hearers may know that they are either listening to fiction or they have found a mother who really knows what the difference is between lying and imagination. There was something sadly familiar about the words when a mother not long ago said, "My little fellow almost breaks my heart; he is very young and yet I have caught him in more than one barefaced lie."

There was agony on her face as she made the statement, as though she pictured that chubby, little, curly-headed youngster irrevocably consigned to perdition. Perhaps not all parents are so deeply concerned; but all who have conscious moral standards are likely to be perplexed by their children's treatment of the matter of veracity. One seldom meets a group of parents without meeting also this problem.

If we take a number of these cases we may learn something about the methods by which children, even those who seem to be most addicted to a free and careless handling of facts, may be brought to really love and defend the truth.

TYPES OF LIES

What are the common circumstances of this problem? They belong in several groups.

1. There is the *play type* in which a child presents as fact that which is but fancy. Notice that when he does this with his own playmates he is not accused of lying; the only criticism they are likely to utter will be based on the limitations of his fancy; to them he may have been too restrained in his imagination; they may help him by adding details or

extra features. But the reaction of the adult is likely to be totally different. That is because his imagination is rusted; it will not work, on fancy's road he lags far behind the child, and then he refuses to play the child's game. But surely no active-minded adult should accuse the child of lying when he weaves his fairy tales or, bidding for a respite from the cold world of reality, recites his adventures in a world of his own making. The dramatic instinct often leads children to statements that adults fail to recognize as the free work of a power that will add much pleasure to the child's life.

2. There is the type that merges the free use of *imaginative* materials with an equally free use of realities. Children tell of weird conversations with actual neighbors. Sometimes the details are so circumstantial that the peace of the neighborhood is threatened. At other times the combination will be entirely different, as when children embellish the incidents of school-life with exciting adventures. It may help to watch how such activities of the imagination are treated by other children. They understand them; they know that the narrator is simply throwing in a few elements of reality to give a high coloring to his effort of fancy.

3. There is the *falsehood of excitement.* In the high pressure of a conversation or of some trying circumstance an over-statement or a misrepresentation is made. Called into question the child is forced to stand between an acknowledgment of error or a re-affirmation of what he knows is wrong. With his as yet undeveloped sense of exactitudes he is likely to shrink more from acknowledging a mistake than from trying to prove that he was right by assertion.

4. There is the *camouflage lie.* Just as the birds and many beasts and insects try to look like something else in order to escape notice so a boy will try to look like an angel when he is caught in an escapade, and he will, quite naturally, use his tongue to aid his disguise. Protective lying is not confined to childhood; you may have seen people moving their

lips in order to appear as though they were singing in church. Perhaps you have even seen an occasional adult wearing social feathers that belonged to some other bird, and to many there is no wrong in a misrepresentation to save their reputations, provided they "can get away with it."

It would be easy to enumerate other lapses from veracity on the part of children; but it would be just as easy to compile a longer list of common varieties amongst even good adults. And there is this striking characteristic of children's lapses, they may be short on veracity but they are all marked by sincerity. And, further, whether they are motivated by pride or greed or the desire to shield oneself they are seldom colored by malice. This is mentioned not to palliate any faults but simply to suggest an attitude of sympathy. When an adult mercilessly condemns children as little liars it is usually prudent to protect one's dealings with that adult.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

1. *Take time to discriminate* whenever perplexed or pained by the impression of a falsehood. Before chiding try to determine whether the fault belongs in one of the classes enumerated above. To do so will help to distinguish between an act on the part of a child and the same act on the part of an adult. We have no right to apply to them the standards that are proper to us. Their training, their experience, their habits, aptitudes and standards are different from our own. To expect a little child to be a full-grown saint indicates a meager conception of sainthood, one that would hardly seem to call for all life's ripening experience.

2. *Respect the child's imagination.* Along with his will he is likely to need greatly this power and it is the one we disciplining parents are most likely to crush. Receive his works of imagination as works of art. Listen to them, enjoy them and coöperate with them. Do not analyze them.

When the child begins to spin his yarn he is doing, in one sphere of action, just what he would be doing if he and you were playing bear. Surely you would not then chide him when he takes his turn at growling, and say, "You ought not to growl because you are a boy and not a bear." As they grow up encourage them to write down their romantic inventions. In every way, without repression and without undue consciousness, they may be helped to appreciate the difference between statements of fact and creations of imagination.

3. Our serious difficulty comes when *the borderland* is reached, in the second group above. Here the child must be aided to see the social consequences of the free use of imagination. He must now realize that it is possible to trespass on the rights of others by using them as the materials of his imagination. He will not always immediately understand that he might be hurting Mrs. Jones by creating an imaginary conversation on her lips; but he can see it in time. Do not chide; guide. Do not accuse him of intentional wrong. Suggest the situation that would be created if some one attributed a similar conversation to his mother! These situations are not difficult to meet if sufficient time is given, but a summary manner usually makes matters worse. Stop to consider that the child is learning the art of speech in its higher and more significant realms.

4. With the lie that, uttered in excitement, is repeated to save the child's pride the worst thing to do is to meet it with excitement. Sometimes it must be allowed to pass for a moment; then come back and seek a slow, careful reconstruction of the child's narrative. Help him to use his memory, to cultivate the powers of exact statement, to learn precision in description. He may be using simple hyperbole, but the occasion is a good one to make clear the danger that others might not recognize it, to show that a good deal of harm might be done and sorrow might be caused by failure to exactly represent facts in language.

5. When a child *has to lie to save his skin* it is time to call the system or the circumstances to account as well as

the child. Family relations are not right with children when they lie about food or lessons or work. Set those relations right and there will be few occasions on which they cannot tell parents the truth even when they are in the wrong. But when the parents become only taskmasters they must expect a serf's reaction; if they are domestic policemen they must expect the boys will play the game of dodging and even badgering the officer. Natural enemies will pit their wits against one another. Of course children do wrong even in protective lying. But the cure is to be found, not in bitter accusations, but rather, first, in the effort to remove the causes of fear and, second, in creating in the home a social situation in which there is a common will for the same ends so that the crisis of opposing interests is less likely to occur. The closer parents live with children the less they are likely to find fear looking for a covering in falsehood.

6. But there remain many times in a growing life when it is likely to see more clearly the advantage of a lie than the social ills it may cause. Step by step they must be led to regard all actions under social relations, to think of the other-interest as well as the self-interest. The social mind might lie to shield another, but it will not lie to save itself. The heart of our hope for the young lies in guiding them to form purposes that will set self-interest—the pride and greed and fear that breed lies—in a secondary place, to lead them from the inward life to the outgoing life, from the motive of self to the motives of society. As this consciousness of the wider life in which and for which we live grows in the child there comes the opportunity to show, by precept, the terrible damage that a lie can do, the handicap of the habit of lying, the sorrow and wrong of it all.

Remember we can guide no farther than we go. Truth-acting preaches truth-speaking. Children are likely to detect lies with their eyes more quickly than with their ears. Never label a child as a confirmed liar; once we get a label we are likely to try to like it.

HELPFUL READING

Ethics for Children, *E. L. Cabot* (Houghton, Mifflin Company).
Your Child To-day and To-morrow, *S. M. Gruenberg* (Lippincott). Ch. IV on "The Lies Children Tell" will be helpful.
Educational Problems, *G. S. Hall* (Appleton). Ch. VI on children's lying, its psychology and philosophy.
Moral Education, *E. H. Griggs* (Huebsch). Under "Corrective Discipline" in Ch. XVI.
Religious Education in the Family, *H. F. Cope* (Univ. of Chicago Press). Under "Moral Crises" in Chapters XIX to XXII this and kindred problems are treated.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Give the principal types of "lies" which give rise to the problem?
2. Which seems the most common?
3. Which seems the most dangerous?
4. Do types vary with types of children? or with their experience?
5. How would you proceed to analyze the situation when a child seems to be telling a lie?
6. What good elements are likely to be discoverable in the child's action?
7. What is the peculiar problem of the borderland between free imagination and purposeful twisting of facts?
8. How do we sometimes confirm the habit of lying?
9. How may conditions make truth-telling easier and more natural?
10. Show the meaning and effect of the social motive.

CHAPTER XIV

NERVES

Stating the problem: It was the description given, by the mother, of what we might call a hair-trigger child that led other parents to tell of similar problems, all due to various nerve derangements or maladjustments. The first case was stated something like this: "My youngest is our most serious problem; she is the sweetest child I ever knew; she is loved by all who know her casually or see her occasionally; she can be as pleasant as a day in June; but it often seems, in the family, as though the least little thing will irritate her so that she frets, fumes, fusses, cries and generally makes life miserable for all the rest. She seems to be unusually sensitive so that every one must be always on the watch lest a thoughtless word or act hurt her feelings and start a domestic earthquake."

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Some of us know that child; there are many of her, nearly all are at times most attractive, and people often gloss over their faults by describing them as temperamental. Who cannot recall surprising experiences with angels who carried active volcanoes of passion beneath childhood's sunny exterior? Many homes have their "hair-trigger" children, liable to explode in tears of angry demonstrations at the slightest provocation; and there are not a few households that walk softly as though they trod in a high-explosive factory.

This type of child, seeming to vacillate between the angel and the demon, sunshine at this hour and a howling storm

in the next, needs all our patience and wisdom—our patience lest we give way before the strain of dealing with them and make the case worse than it was before, and our wisdom to help them to ways of self-control.

SOME OF THE CAUSES

What are the causes for these types of behavior? Is it, as we often say, due to self-consciousness? And, if it is, what is self-consciousness in a child? Is it a form of selfishness, as though the child grouped the whole universe about himself and counted all things as ministering to him? The self-consciousness in a child that leads him, or—more often—her, to lose all self-control in expressing anger, disappointment or chagrin is likely to be simply a sheer case of physical derangement. As a matter of fact, any sort of unusual self-consciousness is attributable to physical causes. The boy who blushes, stammers and wiggles does so because, for the first time, he has realized the presence of feet and hands that he does not know how to dispose of; he thinks every one in the room is looking at these members. Further, the sexual awakening is a time of unusual self-consciousness and nervous sensibility with some young people.

In extreme cases, where this self-consciousness is accompanied by irritability we should look for nervous trouble. Too often we blame the moral character of a child where we ought to blame perhaps the mental character of the parents who have failed to recognize the child's physical needs. Nervous irritability, susceptibility to disturbance, and hair-trigger reaction to external stimuli, all may be due to some chronic or organic nerve derangement. Without doubt the first thing to do is to consult a reputable physician.

You can do little for the child's spiritual nature until steps are taken to secure the right working of the physical. It may be that, in a highly nervous state, all our efforts to be kind, to guide into right action, to surround with helpful influences would constitute only so many more causes of

pain and irritation. Nor ought we to assume that the trouble is only a passing one, something that most children outgrow. The wonder is that they outgrow as much as they do; but our reflection ought to be as to how much stronger and happier they might be if we had given them every possible advantage that modern science makes possible, if we especially had been constantly solicitous to remove every possible stumbling block and occasion of offense from their feet. We have no right to leave with them handicaps that we might remove.

One cause of nervousness in children, even in small children, belongs to our modern social conditions; packed programs of school-life for all the daylight hours and social entertainments for the evenings and nights. We will not see how our forcing process, whether in school or society, is fatal to these young lives. Many parents ignore the differences between themselves and children; no matter what they may do for diversion—movies, concerts, excursions, theater, social visiting—the poor little youngsters are carried or dragged through it all, to the disgust of other adults and the damage of the children. Or it may be they are denied all necessary play because the parents have outgrown that necessity.

There is a field of nervous pathology that is still but little understood, though cases are no longer rare, as the hospital records show. One form, hysteria, though apparently simple, is likely to involve so many complex elements that the services of experts in psychology become indispensable.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO MEETING THIS PROBLEM

1. *General conditions.* The nervous troubles that form the basis of the moral problems may be due to a number of general causes: heredity, malnutrition, sickness, physical strain, social environment. First, direct attention to whether the child sleeps sufficiently long and under proper conditions, alone, and in a properly ventilated room. Then, as to food, whether it is really nourishing and is eaten with a

normal appetite. Even a child is likely to manifest anything but a saintly disposition under a steady diet of pie and church-social dinners. A course in domestic science may be a means of grace in many a home. Nourishing food eaten in a quiet, orderly manner, without distractions and under a sense of leisure will be found more than a matter of dietetics.

2. Is there any *unusual strain* on the child's life? Is school-work, in class or in home-study, so taxing that there is a sense of defeat and discouragement? Does the child come home from school worn out? Is this due to the confusion, noise and other irritations of class-work, or is it due to overstrain in gymnasium or on the field? Much trouble can arise from lack of proper attention here. If we try to make these active children into book-boring animals, creatures who live only by working their eyes on minute objects, we must not be surprised if the nerves are overwrought. Rest, play, freedom from care, and gentle tasks that win approbation all help to restore balance here.

3. Look for specific items in a group of *physical maladjustments.* Has the child adenoids? Is there a chronic condition of teeth trouble? Have bad habits been formed in regard to digestion, especially as to evacuation? Does the child need glasses? Is there any physical disability that places this child in conscious and humiliating disadvantage to others?

4. In every case the utmost care must be used to *prevent the child from gaining the impression that she is abnormal.* Many so-called nerve patients are simply people who have acquired the fixed idea that they are different from others, that they have peculiar ailments, cannot live a normal life and have a right to expect constant care and unfailing sympathy. It is remarkable how early children acquire a morbid appetite for the sweets of sympathy. One cannot do them a greater unkindness than to condole with them, to seem overanxious about their health, or in any way to lead them to thinking of themselves as peculiar.

5. Then there is another group of causes of irritability

and hair-trigger situations, that of the *personal environment.* Here trouble is caused either intentionally by teasing and general persecution, or unintentionally by thoughtlessness, by placing the child with social misfits, with people who rub the wrong way. The first cause is the one most prolific of trouble. It is a characteristic of youth, one that lingers long into life with many, to delight in the sufferings of others. This seems to give a sense of power and of superiority. As soon as children discover that any one of their number will be pained by teasing that one will become the focus of their attentions. Perhaps never in life will she suffer more than during those years at their hands. We older folks ought to know what this means, and we ought to know that it goes on and that some children are being given a permanent twist through the persecutions of these young psychological savages.

Now, instead of scoffing at the weakness of the child who complains of being teased, or saying, "Just laugh at them," suppose we try to think through the situation. Do we find it easy just to laugh at them when the gossips, the older malicious ones, try their hands on us? The first thing to do is to help the child to realize that there is no just ground for criticism, that the teasing is not deserved. She must be helped to self-confidence, to assurance of ability to do things and to carry her part in her own world. Teasing is likely to create a morbid sense of inferiority, of inability to accomplish. One comes to believe that he is the butt of the gang simply because he is a dunce and a failure, while, often, the fact is that the gang-leader has turned the shafts of ridicule on him because he feared a rival. Whatever the situation, see to it that your child has every chance to talk it out with you, that there is not one ear, but two heads and two hearts where she, or he, can be sure that fairness and sympathy will be shown.

6. One other suggestion on the spiritual side: do everything possible to *remove causes of irritation.* Without letting the child regard herself as unusual, try to hold in your own mind that she is a special case. Induce the other mem-

bers of the family to have patience and to exercise consideration. In a word, protect this child's mental environment, as far as possible, without developing in her a consciousness of peculiarity. Keep her from trying activities, from experiences that are overstimulating.

When the outburst occurs simply let it die down and, at a later time, help her to see that it has hurt others. Her self-control will grow best out of social considerations. If you take a definite course of action try to do so with her will coöperating with yours.

But the larger range of helpful steps will lie in matters of physical care. She needs physical rest, quietness, steadying occupations. Often she needs a more careful régime all the way through, better food and better habits. When an organic trouble lies at the root only the skilled physician is able to advise properly. In a word, this case is to be treated with the same attention that you would give to a serious sickness, for that is what it usually is at root.

And, always hope; never lose faith in life's normal processes. Take the steps suggested, one by one; give conditions of health, surroundings of strength and calm happiness—and wait.

HELPFUL READING

Nervous Children, *B. R. Tucker* (Badger). A fairly sane review of current medical theory.

Girlhood and Character, *M. E. Moxcey* (Abingdon). Especially good chapters on the physiological factors in training.

Child Training as an Exact Science, *G. W. Jacoby* (Funk & Wagnalls). Physical and consequent psychological treatment; good for well-read parents who can balance its emphasis.

Sons and Daughters, *S. M. Gruenberg,* (Holt). The second section is a simple, helpful discussion of the physical basis of training.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In what ways does the nervous problem constitute a moral problem?
2. What are the most common causes?
3. What of the causes are most easily remedied?

4. How much is due to our forcing processes?
5. What steps should be taken to prevent the physical causes?
6. What of the housing problem as a factor?
7. What psychological causes need attention?
8. What forms of self-consciousness are dangerous?
9. How would you deal with irritating conditions in the home life?

CHAPTER XV

BOY MISCHIEF

Stating the problem: "I sometimes think I have the most mischievous boy that was ever born. He is always in some scrape; I never know what is going to turn up next. The neighbors complain all the time and call him a neighborhood pest. I am afraid that he will get into some serious trouble and grow up a wild boy."

Questioning elicits further facts; that he is nearly twelve years of age, perfectly healthy, running over with energy, has no brothers near his own age but has a group of very close chums, his father—in his mother's words—"is rather inclined to wink at the mischief he gets into"; he is honest, kind and always loving to his parents.

Then came a most interesting answer to one question: "Does he have any serious trouble at school?"

"No; there's the singular part of it; he seems to like school, to get along well with his present teacher, though it was not always so, and he wants always to do more than the school demands."

The items of mischief include breaking windows with balls and stones, playing "ditch" or "leader" through the yards of objecting neighbors, chasing cats, bringing dogs home, setting string traps for unwary pedestrians, even stealing grapes from a neighbor's arbor, and—well, it was evident from reminiscent smiles on masculine faces, that a good deal of their own boyhood was being recited.

The father was not present; but sufficient material was given to form a picture of him, listening to the story of some prank and saying, "Of course he ought not to have done that; but, then, Mother, boys will be boys. I'd hate to

go on the witness stand while Tom was in Court and have to tell all I did when I was a boy."

This masculine attitude, not at all peculiar to this father, complicated the problem for the mother; she felt that she was opposed by an unexpressed but nevertheless potential approval on the part of the one who ought to have helped in keeping Tom straight.

THE FATHER'S PART

1. *Was the father's attitude right and wise?* Not altogether. It was right so far as maintaining a sympathetic memory, so far as trying to see the boy's side, so far as making many allowances for the bottled-up energy of boyhood. But more than this was needed; one ought to see in the adventures of boyhood more than a page in the human comedy; the father ought to see his boy in the process of forming manhood. We men need to get away from this side-line attitude, often one of slothful unwillingness to tackle a difficult problem. We know we cannot change the nature of boys, nor can we expect them to be subdued into a dull, gray, prim conformity to the quiet ways of most adults. But we ought to see to it that our boy is learning how to live, that he is guided through boyhood's experiences into manhood's power, that he is learning self-control and acquiring habits of regard for social rights and duties.

2. *Every boy ought to have a father in the present tense.* This boy, like every other boy, needs first of all a real father. No man is a "good provider" who does not provide guidance, who does not give himself, as well as his working energies, to his family. Duties in this problem may be laid on the fathers first. What has the world a right to expect of the father of a mischievous boy? Something more than a wielder of the rod in an occasional upheaval of indignation, principally at the disturbance of his peace. It has a right to expect that the father will know where his boy spends his leisure, what his companions are, and what habits he is forming. It has a right to expect that

he will furnish interesting, absorbing occupations for his boys, and that he will be guided by a consciousness that they are forming habits, developing ideals, that in this informal free life of leisure they are being educated.

The trouble with some men is that they are too busy with business to take up this larger business, and others are too weary from work to discover the great joy and real recreation of living with children and guiding their lives through comradeship and coöperation.

3. *Boy's energies need direction.* The cure for the boy-trouble lies not in the discovery of a series of restrictions and prohibitions which will keep him out of mischief, but in enlarging the range of his interests, directing the application of his energies and helping him to discover ideals of conduct that will furnish inner preventatives of wrong-doing. His is simply a case of misdirected energy; but who will direct his energies aright? Not his boyhood companions; the gang simply pools its energies and they flow out wherever the opening appears. Nor can those energies be directed by impersonal means; no text-book on boy-ethics is going to keep boys out of apple orchards. The only direction that is effective comes through constant personal contact, by the medium of a genuine confidence and under the force of admiration for greater achievements and powers.

4. There may be *coöperation in direction of the boy's energies.* Personal leadership into new avenues of activities is the largest element toward a solution of the problem. And those who are nearest to the boy must furnish that leadership. He is fortunate if he has older brothers; their discipline does not always appear to be affectionate, but, commonly, they lay up stores of gratitude in the younger brother's heart. Many younger men may find a wonderful field of opportunity in forming friendships with these boys and in guiding them to the better use of their leisure. But, in any case, it is the father who has the first duty and the greater influence.

THE MOTHER'S PART

1. *Motherly understanding.* There are many mothers who understand the boy's point of view at least as well as fathers do. One could imagine that they had once been boys. But, commonly, they tend to expect that Tom will be as sedate as a nun. They find it hard to understand that surging reservoir of energy which must find outlet somewhere. Still less do they understand the spirit of adventure and the active imagination that converts the neighbor's back-yard into the wind-swept plain where Redskins rove, that converts the private garage, or the haymow, into a bandit's den. They cannot understand that high light in the boy's eyes when he comes home from an evening spent in splendid conflict, in daring deeds with desperate pirates. And we all fail to take into account the natural opposition of this unsocialized animal to all forms of repression and regulation, as, for instance, to the policeman who forbids ball-playing on the street or the farmer who would keep the swimmers from the traditional hole in the creek.

We must get into our focus something more than the fact that the boy's mischief disturbs us, that it brings down on our heads neighborly indignation. We must get through the externalities of his acts and think of what is going on within him. It might be well for many mothers to take a course in reading the books of boy-life, Stevenson, Howells, Twain and Eggleston. We might then see that this boy is getting his training in manhood through free adventure, that he cannot get along without some kinds of freedom of action, and we might begin to plan means by which this spirit of active adventure could be satisfied without involving the police.

2. *Coöperation.* Do the mothers who are plagued take the problem itself or only their vexation to the father? Do both parents plan, with older members of the family, a definite course of helpful action?

THE PART OF THE HOME

1. *Learning from the school.* There was one answer to our first question about Tom that furnishes an important clew; it was said that he got along very well in school and seemed to exhibit few of the dangerous symptoms there. Why was this? Simply because the school presented an organized and fairly complete program of activities. Perhaps it was not an ordinary school, but of a type that is happily growing in numbers. There they thought not alone of packing information into helpless human containers; they planned to organize and direct the powers of the many lives in all those school-rooms so that they might experience the best ways of living together. In that school activity, other than the purely mental, had at least as important a place as formal recitations, play was as much a part of the curriculum as literature or science. The home has something to learn from that kind of a school.

2. *Activity at home.* Tom behaved at school because his activity had an outlet in doing the things that seemed desirable to do in coöperation with others. The home may have limitations in this direction, but it also has advantages. It cannot formally mass large numbers; but it can afford opportunity for small groups. Has your home any real place for a boy? Has it any place for him with his chums? Does it provide any outlet for their activities? If Tom came in and said, "Mother, can we all play robber in the basement?" what would your answer be? And might it not be better if Tom and his gang first had been invited to use the facilities of the attic for his adventurous affairs?

3. *The "No-Place-for-Boys" home.* The seriously mischievous boy is commonly the seriously neglected boy. He may be well-furnished with clothes and that sort of thing, but he is neglected as to his needs in free hours, as to the needs of his imaginative nature. Next to the guiding power of his father's companionship comes the guiding power of a program for his energies in the home. That program should take two forms: the provision of opportunities for

the kind of play that is natural to him, and the provision of forms of useful work that will not only use his energies but will also give him the sense of doing something worth while.

One must not expect that boys will be always poring over books or doing crocheting at home. But, when you hear of his deeds abroad, you ought to understand why he was not at home, or at the home of a friend, enjoying a boy's activities.

A workshop, a room where tools and shavings are not taboo, has saved many a boy from the streets and the Juvenile Courts. Sometimes this is difficult to provide in our modern congested system of living, but, usually, we can work it out somewhere, in a neighbor's barn, in the garage, sometimes even in the boy's bedroom. Shavings are an affliction to house-wifely pride; but are they any worse than powder-puffs, doll-rags and the clutter of paper flowers and feminine frippery?

4. *Food in the home.* In the imaginative stage of the boy's life we may help him to find better outlets for his energy through the direction of his reading. He usually shows a marked taste for books of adventure. There are books that show high adventure under motives of human service. He may discover that it is just as spirited a thing to get into the Labrador country and minister there for years as it would be to go roving the South Seas. Not long ago a boy happened—one should always see that these things just happen—to pick up a book telling of the service of men and women in bettering city conditions of living, in caring for children and the unfortunate. He sat doubled up in a chair with that book for an hour, and then he turned and said, "Dad, that's the real life! Gee! it'd be fine to be doing things like that!"

5. *Indirect guidance.* This unresting creature called a boy thinks more than we realize. It is often startling to find that some words we thought had slipped by him entirely have dropped in and found rootage. Do not too

readily pronounce the soil as rocky. Your everyday conversation is determining what this boy thinks about life. You can never reach him by preachments about his misdeeds. True, you must often define them, and clearly point out the social trouble they work and help him to see that they are unworthy. But the effective teaching is incidental. By what we say, casually, about social relations he determines his own social relations. If you do not have an essentially social attitude toward your neighbor's business you cannot expect the boy to take a social attitude toward the neighbor's barn or other property. If we are playing the game of life on selfish principles, ignoring the rights of others when these rights restrict our programs of gain, what right have we to expect that the boy will do any better in his range of life? Many a boy is being punished by his father for the piracy that is but as a gnat to his father's customary camel.

THE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

We need parental coöperation to deal with the boy-mischief problem, for it is not a problem of a boy but of boys. Parents should plan together, not in matters of regulation so much as in matters of providing a large program for the boys of the community. A vacant lot not only saves many back-yards from depredations but it saves many boys. Before the vacant spaces are all gone let every community consecrate some of them to the free, play-life of both boys and girls.

Do you know where the boy spends his time? Do you know with whom? Do you ever find out why he broke that window, or annoyed the neighbor? Do you plan for his outgoing energy as carefully as you plan to build it up with nourishment? Do you give reasons for action as well as restrictions on action? Do you read anywhere near as much about making boy-life as you read either about making clothes and food, or about making money and civil affairs? Have you shown the boy ways of strengthening

the will to do right? Do prayer and the religious life mean anything in relation to daily conduct with him?

HELPFUL READING

BROTHERING THE BOY, *Edward W. Raffety* (Griffith & Rowland). Dr. Raffety deals with real boys and their problems, and with discussions of social means of help; a practical, pointed book.

THE BOY PROBLEM IN THE HOME, *W. B. Forbush* (Pilgrim Press). Although we sometimes wonder whether these boys ever got their faces real dirty there is much very helpful suggestion all through this book.

THE MINISTER AND THE BOY, *Allan Hoben* (Univ. of Chicago Press). Professor Hoben knows real boys and this book will help us to understand them.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Describe the difference between this problem in the city and in the country.
2. Describe the difference between this problem with young boys and with youth.
3. How may fathers help?
4. What hinders fathers from helping?
5. How may older brothers help?
6. What has the school to teach us on this problem?
7. What positive provision should the home make for the boy's activity?
8. What have we a right to expect of the church?
9. What have we a right to expect of the community?

CHAPTER XVI

THE SOPHOMORE STAGE

Stating the problem: It was in a college town; a mother was urging her boy to go with her to the vesper service, somewhat to the embarrassment of the visiting preacher who was in the room. But the boy was not embarrassed. He answered, almost before her request was concluded, "Why, Mother, I never go to those things; no one believes in them any more; there isn't one of the fellows in the college who'd go if he didn't have to."

On the way to chapel the mother presented her problem. John was a thoroughly good boy, always kind and generally well-mannered—with an apology for his persistence in setting convictions before courtesy—but he simply would not go to church, called it "all stuffy nonsense"; he talked a great deal about "modern science" as though he had recently invented it; he insisted that the Bible had been exploded, and held that the "modern mind" took nothing for granted, and assumed an attitude of agnostic indifference to what he called popular superstitions. Of course he was in one of the later years of high school.

"Now what shall I do about it?" she asked. "I thought perhaps you might suggest some good books for him to read, or you might be able to have a talk with him." But it developed that he was not in the habit of reading books beyond his required school work and, later, he developed a perfectly good alibi with respect to all attempts at informal interviews.

THE SITUATION ANALYZED

At least three elements entered in: (1) The boy was passing through a difficult period of readjustment to insti-

tutional religion; (2) he was suffering from mental migraine, auto-intoxication from undigested scraps of information; (3) he was feeling the new experience of being a person and was experimenting in independent action. Perhaps another element consisted in the fact that his mother allowed his mental aberrations to take a focal position in her attention.

1. When a boy begins to feel *the pangs of young manhood* he usually seeks to drop the customs of childhood. Along with short trousers whatever belonged to the earlier period must be left behind. If the church was one of those things, one of the settled habits of childhood, it is likely to be counted among the childish things which no self-respecting young man would longer endure. Often the blame is largely with the church because it insists on his wearing the small child's religious garments. So far as its organization for instruction is concerned it does not sufficiently recognize the difference not alone between elementary school and high school but, still more, between, say, fifteen and seventeen. We must not be surprised if, when all else changes, there is a change, a period of readjustments to religious life. It must not surprise us if there is an unwillingness to continue perfunctory attendance on a church that has no real place for youth.

This sophomoric attitude to religious customs is only indicative of similar attitudes and insurgencies toward all kinds of settled ways. One sort of insurgency means about the same as another.

2. And then, *Seventeen!* Wonderful period! What a thing it is to come on a full-grown world like Balboa sighting the Pacific! To imagine that you see all possible horizons, that in this all-comprehending brain the sum of knowledge is now grasped and understood in its relations! It is all so new, so wonderful, and it is all so different from what any one else has ever discovered! If you have never been through that you have never lived. Youth drinks it all in, demanding only that it shall be new, shall be labelled up-to-the-minute. Youth is intoxication.

3. The dawn of personality. If it is your boy who is going through this experience, think what it means to him to feel that he is a person, he has a will of his own, he can choose what he will know and what he will believe and what he will do. When the harness drops the first thing to do is to leap out of the track.

WHAT SHALL WE DO ABOUT IT?

1. *Take advantage of his vital and positive tendencies.* As to the signs of dawning manhood, manifest in putting away childish things, expect manhood of him. Let it be the father who now calls on him for a man's comradeship and who gives that comradeship. Let the mother count on him for manly traits, make him feel that manhood means reliability, that it has obligations, that it is not only putting off but also taking on, taking on duties, responsibilities. The best way to help a boy over fools' hill is to give him something worth while to carry.

2. In the same manner, *take advantage of his intellectual tendencies.* Is he proud of his little knowledge? Then give him more. Help him to drink deeper. If you don't know what he is talking about, and know that you really know, when he spouts on evolution you had better let that subject alone and find some other in a safer intellectual realm where you can walk with him and go before where he has not yet gone. Help him to see that his horizon is not the end of the world. Never refuse to talk of these things. When a boy airs his doubts give them air; they thrive in close quarters, but oxygen changes the color of some and dissolves others.

3. There are few *dangers* greater at this period than that we shall even seem to *make thinking a sin.* In days gone by more young men were turned from a godly life by bigots who condemned the intellect than one cares to realize. See that your young man does not confound freedom of thought with freedom from thinking. Make him think and keep on thinking. For him just now it is his way out. Do not

worry over the fogs that are about his mind; help him to step forward as far as any light shows; that is the only way to freedom from fog.

4. *He needs friends slightly older* who have but recently been this way, men who will neither laugh at him nor condemn him, men who can help him with his problems. He needs those who will treat him with sincerity. His difficulties are not to be slighted; we dare not sneer at them, for they are very real. Even though we may smile to ourselves, knowing more of the uphill way than he does, we must not smile at him.

If he seems to be merely spouting platitudes, do not sneer at them. They may all be new discoveries to him. Or it may be he has been captured by their pleasing sound. Help him to probe them and prove them.

5. Under all circumstances *deal honestly with the doubter's mind.* Do not try tricks of sophistry; do not expect to convince him where you are not fully convinced yourself. Do not mistake your convictions, and especially your mental customs and traditions, for demonstrable truths. If you present faith to this mind as a process of accepting that which you know cannot be so, or as a way of going ahead with the eyes shut, you are making any life of faith almost impossible to him. He may be inclined to overestimate the importance and reliability of his reasoning powers; but it will not help matters to present religion as essentially irrational.

6. *Take an encouraging attitude* toward the doubter. Show him that you are pleased that he is so interested in these questions. Then see that he really does think about them. Many a doubter is simply sporting his doubts as a decoration; there is a period in some lives for wearing doubts just as surely as there is a period for wearing badges and buttons, and the one follows the other quite closely. Do not let him get away with any pretenses. If he will doubt see that he knows what he is doubting. Keep him out of the intellectual Nirvana of a slothful agnosticism, the

mental paralysis that refuses to think, saying, "Nothing matters; then why worry?"

7. *A sense of humor will help.* Avoid the tragic attitude. There is no reason for thinking that the young fellow is headed straight for perdition simply because he cannot wear with ease your theological garments. The phase he is going through has been and probably will be common to us all. Some day, if we do not spoil things for him, he will look back and smile at it, not in derision, but in wonder that it all seemed so dreadfully tragic to him. And perhaps, when we get a better perspective on the whole of life, we may smile, too, on the tragic seriousness with which we have treated some of these questions.

8. *Avoid the attempt to exercise authority in matters of thought.* A dawning personality resents that most of all. You may be able to compel his body to go to church; but you can exercise no compulsion on his mind, and every attempted exercise of authority simply widens the breach between you. It persuades him of nothing except that your faith cannot meet difficulties in the open, that it has to resort to force.

PRACTICAL EMPHASIS

1. But, on the other hand, it is not well to magnify unduly the intellectual difficulties. They do stand out sharply; but they are not the whole of life. Nor is it in this intellectual area that the final solutions will come. This young man does need light but, still more, he needs experience. He needs to find a working way of living. The solution of this problem is largely a practical one. You cannot convince him by syllogism of the integrity of the religious life, but you can help him to discover it by experience. When he has found it that way no man can take it from him.

2. The main thing to do is to *help him experience* what this religious life really is. Be patient with his sneers at the church; be patient with his impatience at your beliefs. But take hold of his tendency to act, his desires for something worth while to do in the world. You will hardly ever

find a young man with sand enough to protest against the prevailing order who does not also have a burning desire to do something to make the world more after the fashion of the ideals he is cherishing.

3. One can almost always *count on idealism* in youth and on a willingness to get ideals into action. Can we find opportunities for them? That is the practical question we need to face. He will go forward through his storm-and-stress period, through his doubts and difficulties, if he can find some place to take hold of life as a reality and as a way of service. There is an ancient endorsement of that mode of procedure: "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine." Do not preach about doing things, simply make it possible for him to do them.

4. *Help him to find a normal social life.* There are many others passing through his experience; they should find somewhere hospitable welcome as a group. Get them in your home. Let them taste the social joys of life. Often in fellowship with its great riches we find our larger faith. Friendship is always a help.

Believe in the good in him. Hold fast to that. Expect greater good. Take it for granted he is seriously seeking truth. Make the most of all his ideals. Never lose faith in his possibilities. Never scoff at his idealistic statements. Live your faith and you will find demonstrations more effective than definitions and example beating all argument.

HELPFUL READING

THE CORNERSTONE OF EDUCATION, *Edw. Lyttelton* (Putnam). The headmaster of a great school writing from long and intimate knowledge of older boys.

BROTHERING THE BOY, *Edw. W. Rafferty* (Griffith & Rowland). Especially Chs. VI, XVII and XIX.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What harm can come from taking too seriously the intellectual rebellion of young people?
2. What are the hopeful features of the problem?

3. How should we help young people to think of their own doubts in religious matters?
4. What kinds of friends are most likely to be helpful at this time?
5. What forms of habits and work will help?
6. What qualities are most helpful in parents?
7. Describe any cases under your observation.

CHAPTER XVII

FATHERS AND SONS

Stating the problem: Why should there be any problem as to the relations between a boy and his father? Theoretically, if ever two people ought to be able to agree these would be the ones; but, practically, every father who has given any thought at all to his boys as they have grown up has realized that there have been critical periods when relations were severely strained or tested. Every boy who looks back will recall, even in the happiest of relationships, at least difficulty in understanding his father's point of view and, perhaps, often conflict of wills, while there will still stand the very large number of instances in which there has been distinct alienation and even hostility.

ANALYZING THE SITUATION

The problem is partly one of *understanding.* Fathers have very great difficulty in knowing boys and boys have still greater difficulty in knowing fathers. We may think we know, but there is no knowledge without sympathy. We do not know until we understand, and we do not understand until we have stood, at least to some degree, in the other person's place. Fathers find it hard to really recall boyhood. They remember some of its incidents, but its feelings, its point of view and its customs and standards of action they must recreate into reality. For the understanding that leads to sympathy is something more than a matter of recalling your escapades when you were a lad; it involves an honest effort to get into the boy's real present world, into his way of looking at things. Recalling your

misdeeds may only lead to a weak toleration toward the boy; reliving his life will help toward comradeship.

Is there anything harder for the adult to realize than the reality of the boy's world? We have so long ago abandoned his standards, discounted his compulsions and outgrown some of his ideals that they have lost their sense of reality. But to him they are as potent as they once were to us; his sense of group-loyalty is as definite to him as any social obligations could be to us. Inevitably his own standards must control his actions. He cannot reach forward to ours. When we look at his actions we must try to see them in the light of his entire world, for they can only be judged as parts of his complete social experience.

HELPFUL STEPS

1. Perhaps the longest step we can take into the boy's world, so as to develop and maintain real sympathy will be through *sharing his experiences.* Of course there are many experiences into which we cannot enter, but there is one range into which practically all have access. We cannot go with him to his group gatherings, to his high-school society, and we cannot pass with him through the diary-writing period nor know all that goes on in his inner self when the choice of neckties first assumes importance, but into his play-world we can go quite freely. This is the world where you will know him best and he will find out most about you. It is the world where boys and men, both, are just what they are. Fathers often say, "I find it so hard to get near to my boy; he seems not to wish to sit down and talk with me, and I can't get his confidence." That is not strange—if you went after it. Confidence is one of the things that never comes by seeking. And quiet talks with our boys never come out right when they are planned ahead, when we say to ourselves, "Now it is my duty to have an earnest conversation with Frank."

Play and play interests afford a wonderful opportunity of sharing life. It's hard to lecture; but how different it

is when you are walking home together from the game, or when you are talking it over together? Every man is just about as young as the people he can play with. If he cannot play he is sadly handicapped for getting near to any boy. Not only does the common play develop mutual understanding, it develops habits of mutual coöperation, as in team plays of friendly rivalry and in matched games. Moreover it is a chastening discipline often for fathers; it develops personal humility and a due appreciation of the boy when he surpasses you at the game you have taught him. Father and son are on a new level when they walk home from that tennis set that resulted in the boy's favor.

Those fathers who have not seriously tried the program of play as a means of developing sympathy will be likely to dismiss it as a theorist's dream, or, at best, as one of the minor possibilities. They are mistaken; it is probably the major possibility. This is the case because play is the major experience for the boy. Play is his approach to the business, the game of life. Play is the language he thoroughly understands and it is a language in which you can say almost anything you wish. These lines are being written after three hours of strenuous play, but they are also written in the light of years of observation and especially of grateful memories of soul-contacts that came through play. They could not have come so freely, so happily, in any other way.

2. *A father's real work.* But fathers say, "We are busy people; our playing days are past; we are no longer boys; we have our work to do." One wonders what is a man's most important work. Surely if he has sons it is to bring them up in fine and efficient Christian manhood. No duty has priority over that. Some of us are very busy, with crowded schedules; but we must crowd out a lesser duty here and there to make place for this major one; and some of us simply like to "fool" ourselves—and, if possible, our friends—into thinking that we are busy. No matter, real or imagined, our business must make way for this call from our boys. We owe them some of ourselves.

3. There lies the main principle, *self-giving,* the discovery of our boys by the gift of ourselves to them. We like to be known as good providers, but what do we provide? Shelter, food, comforts, education? None of these things minister much to the real lives in our homes; none of these afford much for personality. We must provide ourselves. Play has been emphasized as one means of self-giving; it reveals the principle that holds in all sharing of life as a sharing of experience. Fathers and sons become comrades in the pathway of a developing sharing of life. The boy who shares your game will be likely to want you to share his game, his larger round of interests, to talk with you of his friends, his plans and his ambitions. We want their confidence; we must give it time to develop. If we would share their hearts we must share much of their time and their general experiences.

4. *Confidences must be mutual.* Open hearts are found only where hearts are open. Fathers must take the first steps. Tell the boy your life so as to help him to understand you. And that is perhaps fully as important as that you should understand him. Certainly there would be less of conflict, less of cross-purposes if we were more frank, if we talked over our plans and some of our problems with our growing children. Help them to share in the family life, to develop a sense of responsibility and of coöperation with you.

5. And this confidence on your part is a step toward and an indication of something the boy greatly needs, your *faith.* Children are usually about as bad, and as good, as we expect them to be. We have forgotten our ideals and we give them credit for none—and they try not to disappoint us. There is nothing to which a growing life more readily responds than faith. Let them know you believe them capable of fine thoughts and noble deeds and they will strain every nerve to meet your expectations. Here fathers do well to borrow a leaf from the mother's book; no matter what happens they believe in the boys, and how the boys hate to disappoint them! Faith is not simply blind con-

fidence. It is the vision you hold of what this boy is capable of being and doing. You hold this before him by holding it before yourself. It is so implicit in all your attitudes that, whether it finds its way into word or not, it is as though you said, "This is what I am sure you can do." And he does it.

6. This attitude of faith is really part of something yet higher and more inclusive, the fine spirit of *comradeship*. Take it for granted that the boys are walking beside you. That is the only way to make sure that they are. They will not walk in the way of life under our direction; they will not take it on our advice, still less on our compulsion; but they will walk in any way that we show to be a worthy one. This is the application of the social method in the religious training of our children; it must be a social experience they share with us. Comradeship means time together, work together, enterprises together, talk together. It means our coöperation with them and the opportunity for their coöperation with us. It means sharing life. And when I try to do that I wonder whether I am good enough, whether my motives are simple enough, my soul pure enough, to walk with my boy through life.

7. And *patience*. Even under the best of circumstances human comradeship tests us all. One wonders whether things might not be better if fathers were as patient with boys as boys are with fathers. Not that the boy is necessarily right at all times; that is not the point; he thinks he is and he has to control himself to get his father's viewpoint. But, if we really love, then we wait, we try to understand with the love that beareth all things, endureth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things,—and that is what a boy needs, and answers to with all his life.

CASES IN POINT

The relations between Mr. B. and his three boys were so close and cordial that every one spoke of them as chums. Looking for causes one found that he devoted a definite

time of every day to being with them; he played ball with them; he taught them to make things; the summer vacation found them together in camp where, as people said: "Everywhere that Daddy went the boys went with him, too."

Another father found himself seriously estranged from his oldest boy; he could not understand why they seemed to be at sword's points. In fact he never did find out why they were apart; but they came together and understood one another when, one day, that father pushed aside his own self-conscious reserve and tried to tell his boy just why he was embarking on a particular course of action. It was a hard thing to do, because he thought the lad would sneer at him for idealism; but, instead of that, there came the warm flow of enthusiasm. He put his arm on his father's shoulder and said, "That's the only thing to do." Then he opened up his own purposes and ideals.

Mr. H. had to bring his boy home from college for misconduct. They had, as he put it, a "big set-to" when he started the boy to work. But in that work they found common ground for discussion, common matters of interest, and, working together, they came to understand and love.

One father tells how he had a sudden awakening; he had found his boys drifting away from him. Then he overheard them talking together and he realized that they were small boys no longer, that he was really listening to men who were thinking of life in a man's terms. He had failed to realize their development, failed to change his attitude as a father. He said that the revelation flashed on him, and from that time on he had no difficulty so long as he accepted those boys as men and took them fully into his man life, leaving them their own responsibilities, counting on them just as he would count on any other man and confiding in them as he would in his equals.

HELPFUL READING

Brothering the Boy, *E. W. Raffety* (Griffith & Rowland).
The Minister and the Boy, *Allan Hoben* (Univ. of Chicago Press).
That Boy of Yours, *J. S. Kirtley* (Doran). These three books will help any father to a better understanding of his boys. They are not technical studies.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What separates boys and their fathers?
2. What most naturally brings and holds them together?
3. What will it cost the father to know and grow with his boy?
4. What will be the personal benefits to the father?
5. What is meant by having faith in your boy?
6. How can we quicken our imaginative sympathy with boyhood?
7. Describe any favorable cases that you know.
8. Look back and consider whether this problem is prevalent. If so, give reasons.

CHAPTER XVIII

LOST CONFIDENCES

Stating the problem: "How can we hold the confidence of our children? Every one seems to preach about keeping the growing child's confidence; but I don't know any parents who really succeed in this; as children grow up they seem to draw away from us. Perhaps I am wrong, but it is as though they were keeping things from us, and it makes it very hard for fathers and mothers to talk over certain subjects with them."

This is the problem just as one mother stated it. Those who heard made it quite evident that the problem was by no means uncommon. Perhaps it might be stated differently. On the train, in the intimacy that develops in a trans-continental trip, a fellow passenger said, "I know I have done wrong in postponing talking over some matters with my oldest boy—and now I won't see him for months. But the truth is every time I tried to talk with him it just seemed as though I couldn't get on just the right confidential terms."

The problem is a complex one. Once father and mother were the closest friends of their little ones; to them they would confide what no other ear might be permitted to receive. And now that they are older they prefer the confidences of their schoolmates. Somewhere a change has come and a break has occurred. Then, besides, these children are so busy they have no time to tell mother all their gossip and their plans. At the same time there has developed, on the parents' side, a keener consciousness of the value of the child's confidence; not only do they desire to share in the guidance of his life, but they grow hungry

for what his young life and vigor has to give them. And, most important, parents feel an added responsibility, especially to talk with their children about the larger issues of life and about the things they ought to know regarding sex. Yet, even when family relations have been ideal, one is liable to find himself confronted with a closed door. It is as though we have come to the gate of a fair garden where often we have walked and, suddenly and without warning, the door is shut and the owner stands within, key in hand, ignoring our pleas for entrance.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

1. *Children change.* They cease to be children. The figure of the fair garden fails because this young person goes through transformations no garden could know. The mind of a little child is open to almost all. Their lack of reticence is familiar and, sometimes, embarrassing. With self-consciousness comes a sense of possessing a gate and a key to the inner life. Perhaps at no time more than in youth is one so conscious of the realities of an inner life and at no time is the desire so keen to preserve it sacred and keep it secret. To open the door is a sign that we honor some one person more than any other. And this one thus honored is quite likely to be a new friend. That is a characteristic of youth's growing social experience; he is likely to let in a new friend rather than an old one. So we may expect and ought to respect a certain kind of reticence on the part of even our own children. It is a mark both of self-consciousness—which is an inevitable and passing stage—and of self-respect—which is highly desirable.

2. *This growing person expects to be treated as a person.* He quite properly expects to receive confidences as well as to give them. This we fail to recognize or choose to ignore. We do not give them our confidence. We do not tell them what we are troubled over nor do we share with them our hopes and joys. We expect a youth who feels

he is a man to hold an open door for us while we maintain the closed door which the adults keep toward the child. If we would keep the avenues open there must be freedom to go both ways. You can depend upon it that he only gives confidence for confidence with those youthful friends whom you envy, and when a girl gets a "crush" it is not long a one-sided affair.

3. *The break is seldom sudden;* we realize it suddenly and with a shock, but it has been coming on gradually. The child has been growing away from us unless we have been sympathetically growing up with him. And this is the difficult thing to do. We imagine we are trying to be sympathetic; but no one is sympathetic by trying. Even we older people who think we are keeping so young cannot realize that our children at eighteen feel just as we felt at eighteen; indeed in the strain and sophistication of modern life they often feel much older. Now, do we remember how mature—in some respects—we felt at eighteen, how world-wise and competent? True, we laugh at ourselves as we look back; but youth cannot look back, and does not laugh. It takes itself seriously, and ought to, and so ought we.

4. *Confidential relations are not separate experiences;* that is, they do not occur by themselves, but are always a part of other and wider experiences. They come in sharing the whole of life. We have been thinking of them separately, as though we could set times and seasons for them. We have said to ourselves, now this evening I will see if I cannot have a good intimate talk with Herbert—or Helen. But the intimacy we desire does not come that way. Girls are more likely to be intimate with their mothers than boys are with their fathers because, in most families, they are likely to share duties together. Working together is a very simple and, to the youth, a very real way of sharing life. It is in this sharing of life that the walls or partitions are broken down and all life's larger areas are shared together.

We all know how common experiences make for inti-

macy; the fellow workman may know his partner or "buddie" as well as his wife does. Men who hunt together open their hearts by the campfire. Sometimes a great common experience of tragedy or sorrow breaks down these walls in a family. But the fault is ours that they have been built up. We have failed to give the child a growing share in our daily lives; he has not had the chance to be as near to us as when his play was his work and we shared it with him. Constant coöperation is the secret of constant confidence.

5. *Certain confidences are too long deferred,* so long that they become forced and unnatural. This it is that makes it so difficult for fathers to talk to their boys about sex matters. They know they ought to do it; they know no one else can do it so well and that, while they wait, these minds are being filled with misinformation or with foul, gutter-bred facts. Yet they hesitate because they do not know where to begin; they have lost the connection. They failed to realize that there never was a time, from the day the boy could ask an intelligent question, when they did not have a duty and opportunity to teach him. They waited, thinking they would begin when the so-called dangerous years arrived. But all years are dangerous years in that unless truth is told—in suitable terms—untruths will be told and will become seeds of evil.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP?

In analyzing the problem we have been suggesting the remedies.

1. *Respect youth's rights to a life and thoughts of his own.* He must from now on have the private house of his own heart. Parental authority must not violate his personal rights. In his growing reticence he is not exhibiting coldness toward us; he is only becoming a person, an individual. The more scrupulously we regard his rights in this respect the less he is likely to set up "No Trespass" signs. If Helen is keeping a diary, do not stay

awake nights wondering what she finds to write about. She will get over it and look back and wonder, just as you do whenever you look back to seventeen.

2. *Approach him on the level, as an equal,* not with condescension nor with any parade of the advantages of longer experience. He may often seem to discount your experience, but, at heart, he knows better. If the links have been broken in the past do not try to pick them up where they were broken but rather seek intimacy on the plane of present experiences. This meets the third point in our analysis of the difficulty. No matter how hard it may be for us we must treat the growing young person as a man or a woman, as having come into our world.

3. *Expect intimacy to come as a natural part of sharing the whole of life.* Invite them to share your burdens. Do this by simple frankness with them as to family and household affairs. Do not be afraid or ashamed to discuss with them your business perplexities. You are by no means kind if you think to shield them from worries. They will not so regard your problems. On the other side, share your lives with them. Are you as interested in their interests as you desire them to be interested in what you think is for their good? Do you share with them in the athletic interests, in the politics of the school, in the little, big things of their lives? Do mothers really get enthusiastic about the girl's crowd? Some do—and their friends wonder how they stay so young; and why the young folks prefer that home to outside attractions. The two things go together. Unless we can share all of life together with them what right have we to share its innermost places?

4. There is an area or aspect of the life that should be shared in which we parents are most guiltily selfish; we do not *share the spiritual life of ideals.* We keep the really valuable, vital and beautiful part of religion to ourselves. Here are the youth, idealists, eager and hungry for every ideal expression of life, and when they turn to us for bread we offer stones. We present religion as a matter of forms, of the church and custom, while within us it is a living

bread, an upspringing fountain of water of life. If we who cherish this life within do not share it with them, talk of it as it really is to us, tell them in simple, honest terms what it really means, how can we hope to minister to their deepest needs? If we give but the shell, the externals, the outer form that religion takes, will they not know we are withholding from them?

Family worship when it is simple and sincere helps to hold open the doors to these secret places. When that worship becomes the act of the family uniting in expressing its highest hopes, in finding itself in seeking God, then children form the habit of thinking of ideals as part of the family life. When there is a sharing of joy in recalling the thrilling expressions of splendid ideals in the words of ancient prophets and singers this language of youth's hopes becomes normal in the family. Where religion is not only a constant experience in life but has also its recognized and expressed high levels in the family, children feel free to let us know their hearts. And the heart of youth is crowded with ideals. It is not that they are callous but that our hands are clumsy and we fumble with the delicate latch.

HELPFUL READING

Sex Education, *M. Bigelow* (Macmillan). Distinctly for parents and teachers; one of the best, sanest, fundamental discussions.

From Youth to Manhood, *W. S. Hall* (Association Press). For fathers to read with their boys or to interpret to them; clear, wholesome and scientific.

Girl and Woman, *C. W. Latimer* (Appletons). A comprehensive treatment for mothers and older girls.

Child Study and Child Training, *W. B. Forbush* (Scribners). Ch. XI discusses this problem and gives references to books to be used in the instruction of young children.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Have we the right to expect the under-reserved confidence of children and young people in all things?
2. What causes in us hold back their confidence?

3. What are the causes in them?
4. What are the dangers of reserve, and of confidences withheld?
5. What are the bases of continuous intimacy?
6. What forms of our own confidence do we owe to children?
7. Why is it particularly difficult to have intimacy on personal problems?

CHAPTER XIX

THE PROBLEM OF CURRENT STANDARDS

Stating the problem: "Our children are so influenced by the life about them, with its low ideals, that the efforts of the home life seem to be almost wholly wiped out. How can the family counteract current standards of life?"

One can leave the question of the prevalence and reality of this problem to any group of parents. It brings us face to face with one of the constantly active factors in children's education. Among the outside forces which constantly operate to determine character we would certainly include example, ideals and standards. Every growing person is constantly measuring himself against a variety of standards; he continues this process of judging himself and adjusting himself until life's habits are fairly fixed, and, often even then, he is likely to break old habits in order to reach some standard that has asserted its desirability or superiority. In childhood the standards are set, first, by persons and, later, by each social group into which the child comes, the family, school, general social life and smaller particular groups.

THE SITUATION

The influential standards are those that offer the most by way of social approbation and personal pleasure. As these growing young people in our families become more and more social persons the standards of their social groups become increasingly influential with them. That is why it often happens that the social customs, the mode of living and the popular ideals of the high-school crowd seem so much more powerful with youth than do the ideals, the

habits and even the rules of the home. In such cases the high-school crowd is a real and effective social group while the family may have lost the power of social life and may attempt to enforce its standards only by arbitrary methods.

One thing is certain: that young people always will be profoundly influenced by the standards set by their society. They will always desire to measure up to what is expected of them by their group. They will refuse to disappoint social expectations. These facts ought to suggest a most important possibility in home training, that in it we should so develop social living that its standards, being set high and made desirable, should have full force in the lives of children. These determinating standards are either intentional or accidental. Commonly they are accidental; we should make them intentional; they should be designed with the purpose of helping our children to think of life in worthy terms, to regard the strong and high Christian virtues as desirable. In a word, it is possible for the family deliberately to establish Christian standards of life which will be as effective as those which now control.

THE DANGER

We need to face the evil wrought by current standards of life. Commonly popular ideals of things worth while, especially as these are presented to young people, are not helpful toward good character. The curse of covetousness has soaked clean down into all our life; the whole world tends to measure every man by the money he has and the goods he can display. The conventions of the hour are those of selfishness and pride, of the passion for gain and display. Children find themselves in a social order, especially in schools, where waste and extravagance is a virtue, where merit is awarded to the vain and the frivolous while seriousness of purpose is discounted. The social standards which they see most immediately are simply those of the barn-building fool of Christ's parable worked down into the terms of youth life.

The pressure of these popular, current standards is very strong. They have tremendous social power. It is not enough to say to children that they must refuse to conform. Few adults know how young people suffer from social ostracism, from ridicule and scorn, when they cannot spend as their crowd spends, when they cannot in all respects do as the others do. Parents face a difficult situation. We know these popular standards are often wrong; we know that many of them are most vicious. Yet, if we have any sympathy at all, we dread the pain our children will suffer if they must be classed as "cheap skates," "molly-coddles" and "frumps," and, still more, their suffering in social separation from their friends. We ourselves conform to social demands which we ought to resist. It would be, if we only knew it, much easier to live lives of social protest, and yet we do not do it; we allow others to set our standards of clothes; we are slaves to conventions, and not all these conventions are devoid of moral significance. If it is so hard for a man to defy the custom of carrying the serf's badge of a starched collar, how much harder must it be for his children to defy the conventions of their social group who are all of the age when conventions count for so much!

REMEDIES

1. There are at least two important points to remember. The first is that *youth must have standards created by a social group in which he will find pleasure and approbation.* It is possible to break away from popular standards and to become insurgents only when we have others with us. Can the family make standards for its members? To an important degree it can. There is a time when family opinion is the most influential to a child. But full often that family opinion is silent, often it is conscious of no standards, while opinion outside is vociferous and constantly insists on its standards. This insistence is not in words alone; it is principally in action.

That is where the family has its chance; in beginning early—it has the first opportunity, anyway—in establishing ideals by the constant influence of living examples. Here is where we must ask ourselves, Have we, in the family life, actual Christian standards of living? That is, are the matters of daily conduct, of home-making, of goods, clothes, expenditures and upkeep so determined by a Christian interpretation of life that this Christian standard declares itself in them all? This is only another way of applying the principle of doing all things to the glory of God; but it makes that principle an acid test, one that determines everyday action. You can be absolutely certain that the way you act about life will speak louder and more clearly to children than any arguments concerning current standards.

The success of this method depends, first, on whether these Christian standards do effectively and constantly prevail, and, second, on whether there is a real social life that makes them effective to young people. Where that life prevails, where the family group really exists for the sake of lives, its standards will always be more influential than any others that can be set up.

2. The second principle is that children must be aided to look *through standards into the principles back of them.* The best way to do this is to give them a share in the experience of basing standards on principles. Encourage them to share in the discussion in the family of its methods, to share in forming its plans and arranging its expenditures, to have a part in determining what shall be done and what shall not be done, and to determine these things by high principles of life. Let them see how principles work out in action. If here in this family group we together decide on procedure by applying Christ's law of love and service the effect will be not only to help them to form standards but also to displace outer standards by inner ones, to displace fashion and custom with ideals, motives and principles. We cannot meet the craze of the age, its wild orgy of spending, its triviality and greed, by

ranting against it; but we can set around young lives that which will be more forcible than all the age appeals, the joy and beauty and strength of a life that has found greater values, that looks through these popular standards and comes to know how foolish and empty they are.

3. Children can be guided into *social groups that have higher standards.* It is possible to help them in their choice of friends and to guide them in the rejection of associates who infect with unworthy ideals. Patience and courage are a small price to pay in helping children to form a healthful social environment.

4. Children find guiding ideals in their ideal world, in their reading, their dramas and plays. Books may be our effective coöperators.

HELPFUL READING

HONESTY, *Wm. Healy* (Bobbs-Merrill). How this element of character is developed.

EVERYDAY ETHICS, *E. L. Cabot* (Holt). A good book to have at hand with its many methods of teaching children on ethical problems and duties.

ETHICS, *Dewey & Tufts* (Holt). Parents especially need to get some fundamental understanding of the ethics of our social life, and this is one of the most useful and readable books.

CHILD NATURE AND CHILD NURTURE, *E. P. St. John* (Pilgrim Press). Good discussions of property and training in its use.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY, *H. F. Cope* (Macmillan). Chap. IX discusses the development of a democratic social life in the family.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by popular standards?
2. How are they formed?
3. What are the dangers in such standards?
4. What makes the conventions of a group so potent in youth?
5. How can the family establish effective standards?
6. What are the especially dangerous attitudes for parents to take?
7. How can young people be helped in discovering their own principles of conduct?

CHAPTER XX

SLACKERS

Stating the problem: "What shall we do with children who will not work in the home?"

Sometimes the problem is presented in other forms: "Some of my children seem to be born lazy; they avoid every exertion except the one of avoiding work." "I don't think my children are lazy; but they absolutely refuse to do any form of housework." One earnest woman stated her question this way, "You say that every child ought to have a share in the duties of the home; that is all very well in a book;* but it won't work out in our home; every one is either too busy to do any regular duty or they fear what their friends will think of them."

ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

Here, then, is the problem: *if the family life is to become effective in the development of character it must offer to every member a fair share in all its life, including that of activity and common service.* This is the case, not alone because modern industrial conditions often compel us all to lend a hand, but because this service is desirable in order that the child may experience family life and social life not only in terms of receiving, but in terms of giving; that it may become a truly unselfish, serviceful life for all. In the last analysis any educational effort is a success in the degree that it affords active experience, of a designed character, to those who are being educated. The principle

* The reference was to Chapter VII in the author's book, "Religious Education in the Family."

of learning by doing means the guidance of persons in the experience of action and enterprise. It is important to understand this principle and to apply it in the family so that when we seek the services of children, we are not simply using them as substitutes for servants, but we are guiding them into sharing in the active life of the family as a life of service. And then we need to see, always, that life as service is the essential positive aspect of a religious life.

But many things hinder. Those children who, when they were little, begged for a chance to help, now beg off; they find so many other things to do; school or friendships engross their time; their energies find many new outlets; household duties seem to be monotonous and often trivial. Often they feel that they would lose social caste if it were known that they worked at home; it would be a tragedy to be discovered washing dishes. Sometimes they are actually physically weary all the time and sincerely glad to escape work.

Yet we must not give up the effort to secure for our children the great advantages of sharing the full life of the home; they will not thank us in the coming years if we protect them from these rights. We may foolishly congratulate ourselves that they have never known what it is to work. That boast is a reflection on the good sense of any parents; it is laying up the pains of a deferred education for our children; it is robbing them of their present rights. It may be harder to get them to do things than to do things ourselves; but that is true of all teaching; any teacher could work out a problem in a tenth of the time she takes in teaching it.

THE DIFFICULTIES

We can turn to analyze the difficulties in the way of this task by asking, First, why do they refuse to share home duties? Here we get a number of answers.

1. Take the one, "Too busy," first. We parents must

look at that squarely; are we asking too much? Are these young lives over-pressed? Some are. Then comes the question whether the items of their program are all essential, whether they are all of a value equal to that which home duties would have? We must not arbitrarily decide for them; we must help them to think out the values of their activities and to lay out balanced programs, to elect for themselves the best ways of using their time. Nor must this mean that they will be perpetual drudges, living without recreation or free hours of leisure.

But the difficulty usually rises because of a lack of program; they have no time because they make no plans; they are driven hither and thither. They would not always be unwilling to help if they could feel the freedom that comes from restraint and control of one's time and actions. Perhaps we who now demand their help have been too indifferent to the manner in which their time has been filled; imperceptibly and without our knowledge or thought they have gradually become fully occupied. They need our counsel and help to arrange their lives.

2. Sometimes we are confronted with plain indifference; they think we can afford to hire help and they see no reason why they should be called on for services. Then the fault is usually our own; we have failed to maintain that attitude of happy coöperation which marks little children. We are trying to reëstablish lost habits.

3. Often we have been keeping these children out of the real life of the family; they have been living as dependents and not as members of the firm. This is the most common error. Children do not really belong in the family as equals. When they share its councils, when there is developed in them the sense that all phases of the home life belong to them, when the family circle is in all things a group of equal coöperators then they answer to this sense of ownership and partnership. The ideal condition is reached when children voluntarily take over duties because they feel that the home is their responsibility, the property and privilege of all alike.

MEETING THE PROBLEM

In this problem, as in many others, we come back to a matter of atmosphere and attitude of mind. It is a problem that does not exist in the family where a true community life is lived, where each one feels that it is neither Father's home nor Mother's but OURS.

1. But, you ask, what of the feeling of the degradation of household labor? That feeling belongs to a past century, to the old feudal social ways of thinking. It is a habit of mind that we parents foolishly perpetuate by our casual remarks about labor, often by our attitude to domestic assistants (a disappearing class whom, in the old days we used to call "servants") or by our own attitude toward good honest work. True, our children are influenced by the standards that prevail amongst their friends, but such standards soon fall before steady loyalty to other standards in the home. If we take the modern, Christian attitude toward work; if we are not ourselves affected by this foolish and cheap, snobbish attitude toward work, we shall find that outside opinion has little weight with them. But if we have trained them to esteem only the white-collar occupations, if we habitually bow before the parasites and sneer at the producers, we must not be surprised if they apply our doctrines to the duties we offer them. *No disgrace is greater than that of the parents who receive without giving.*

2. Another phase of the difficulty rises from the fact that we often ask children to undertake duties without giving them fair preparation. Even housework demands some expertness. We must be willing to take the teacher's pains, to lead them step by step from simple processes to more complex ones, from minor responsibilities to major ones. Our tendency is to think this matter out in terms of labor saving and to become impatient if it consumes our time to secure their help. *The purpose of this work is education.*

3. Are you directing the voluntary attitudes of little children toward the activities of the home? Do you take

time to think how the young child's attitude of cheerful helpfulness may be continued by affording him or her growing opportunities? Do you demand work as a bald duty or offer it as an opportunity of coöperation? Do we build up the child's coöperative habits? Is your attitude that of the "boss" or that of the partner? Remember that little children, just like grown folks, crave the sense of responsible sharing and shrink from the drudgery of mere slave or task work. The central problem of labor, everywhere, is to make it the full and free part that free-men play together. This is not less true in the family. Our work must have their heads and their hearts or their hand-service will have little value. This work must be *a part of the social sharing of life.*

CASES

The most helpful method will be to take real cases under your own observation, cases that show whether children like to work under normal conditions, whether they can learn to work, whether they benefit or not by work; cases such as that in the home of the college president who calmly related to a group of educators how, in his family, they had met the servant problem by his older boys and girls taking over all the housework, and now "the up-keep of that house is their pride."

DISCUSSION POINTS

In how far can we develop in little children any real consciousness of partnership? Do we take the same attitude toward work in general that we expect of them toward household duties? Is there any essential disgrace in a boy's washing dishes? What makes any work honorable or otherwise? Do we consider the child's physical limitations? Read over carefully that beautiful poem, often used as a hymn, "New every morning is the Love," by Keble. Get the complete poem and read particularly the

stanza beginning "The trivial round." In what ways can we get the sense of the hallowed joy of common service? In what ways can we make daily duty truly worship by its sense of fellowship with God and with all His family? Does this life of daily service mean to us the expression of the love we bear a common Father? Are our daily duties so colored by this joy that even drudgery becomes divine?

HELPFUL READING

MAKING THE BEST OF OUR CHILDREN, Vol. 1, Ch. 6, *Wood-Allen* (McClurg). A series of brief but helpful chapters on this and other practical problems.

DUTIES IN THE HOME, *Walter Sheldon* (Welch). The best practical discussion, giving many most interesting details.

THE HOME AS A SCHOOL, *H. F. Cope* (Griffith & Rowland). A discussion of social training through work and living in the family.

WHEN MOTHER LETS US HELP, *C. Johnson* (Moffat, Yard). There are two volumes in this series on ways in which children happily share in home duties.

THE CHILD HOUSEKEEPER, *E. Colson* (Barnes). Practical and stimulating both for children and parents.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important that all children should do useful work?
2. What are the rights of a child as to work?
3. What are the rights of society as to its work?
4. How would you meet the difficulty of an overcrowded program for children?
5. How do you distinguish their work and that of hired servants?
6. How do you prepare them to do the work well and happily?
7. How can work be made attractive?
8. What motives should be cultivated?
9. How do you overcome the problem of disappearance of family duties in apartment-living or in our modern style of housing?

CHAPTER XXI

THE PROBLEM OF MONEY

Stating the problem: "How can we train children to a right use of money?"

Spending-money, allowances, savings, gifts, church-offerings; all are varieties of one great perplexity to many parents. Yet that perplexity may be our opportunity. If money is the constant discipline of later life we cannot too early train children in the right habits of its use. Whether we plan to do so or not we can be sure that children very early form those habits which determine their use of money. Although these habits may be modified later it evidently is most easy to mold them at the beginning.

THE DANGERS

We have a keen consciousness of the power of money, but none of its potency; we know what it will do for us, but we disregard what it does with us. We see in it the token of almost every kind of power; but we fail to recognize in it the test of all our personal powers. Character is disciplined by it every moment. Character is revealed by it. Truly money makes the man—or mars him, and his use of money marks him for what he really is and what he essentially is worth. The use of money is one of the constant disciplines of real life, and its right use, whether it be much or little, is one of the best evidences of Christian character. In the family there are problems of money more serious than those of getting it and stretching it.

Children have the idea of possession of things before they come to understand the significance of money. One

round symbol is to them the same as any other round symbol. It is a thing to hold and, soon, a thing to withhold, to guard and protect and to possess. Very early we need to train habits and develop ideas in regard to possessions, to catch the principle that whatever we possess is ours to use. It is an instrument, a tool to use in carrying out the commanding purpose of our lives, that we may be useful in the world, that we may usefully fit into its great program of developing goodness and love.

Now we cannot tell all that to a child; but we can make him feel it gradually by the way we help him to use his possessions. And, especially as, in time, we lay upon him responsibilities in the use of money it is possible to create a mental attitude which takes it for granted that the real test of the use of money is the good we are able to accomplish by it.

METHODS OF TRAINING

1. *Training in use.* Children should have regular allowances very early. They should know what to expect and they should understand that these allowances are intended to cover certain kinds of expenditures. As they grow older the area of their purchasing responsibility should be extended so that, before they leave high school, they should be responsible for the purchase of all their necessities. Perhaps it is objected that one cannot trust to their discretion; they would spend foolishly. Not if they have had experience in the use of money since childhood and if in that experience they have been held to the law that money cannot be spent twice; if it is wasted then they will have to suffer. Through this developing experience there must be held before them the ideal and hope that selfishness will be held in check, that the principle of service will rule all the use of money.

2. *Avoiding avarice.* Even in early childhood one finds difficulty in guiding character between two extremes. Being properly desirous of teaching thrift it is easy to develop avarice. On the other hand, the wasteful spend-

thrift may quickly develop from unrestrained generosity. Perhaps one of the best helps will be to establish the custom of keeping books. Do not make these a task; do not pose as an auditor, but by sympathetic advice get each member of the family into the habit of talking over his accounts with you. Then you have the opportunity to make suggestions, to develop wise forethought without cramping generosity.

3. *Reality of responsibility.* It is most important, for the sake of character, that whatever money is given to or used by children should be truly their own. The seven-year-old should put her own money in the Sunday-school box. It should be money that she could, if she would, use for any other purposes. And it becomes an offering, not because Father sends it by her little hands, but because she wills to use it in this way rather than in some other. This will take guidance. But the first step is to insure the sense of possession, of right to use and responsibility for use. It is much better that children should have and should exercise the right to be selfish with their money, to turn it to candy instead of to charity, than that they should be merely carriers of father's contribution.

4. *Establishing ideals.* Quite likely they will make mistakes in the use of money. You do not forbid them to speak until you are sure they will make no mistakes in grammar. They must learn through real experience. But they must learn under direction. Here parents become teachers, not so much by formal periods of instruction as by our conversation about money and possessions, our own attitudes and habits. Surely we are all to-day in danger of covetousness. And, if the lust of things goes on its present way, the most serious of all dangers facing our children will be that they shall think of life only in terms of the things a man possesses.

5. *The higher joys of money.* In few particulars is the attitude toward life more clearly defined than in the use of money. In a thousand ways the life of to-day is saying to the young, "Man lives for bread and folly—goods are

the only good." We can do little with arguments to meet this evil theory of life, this gospel of materialism. But if we can help our children to find joy in unselfish ends, if we can help them to realize the fallacy of the creed of modern life by experiencing the greater happiness of unselfish living, then they will know the truth that sets them free from the world.

At the same time, by the exercise of their own wills in acts of devotion, in the selection of objects to which they will give their money and in the definite denial of other inducements in the effort to give to some worthy ends they are acquiring some of the habits of the religious life. If habitual, thoughtful, devoted givers, stewards of their Lord's possessions, are not developed in childhood they are not likely to happen in later years. Whether we will be sufficient for the immensely larger responsibilities, the undertakings of a new world in the next generation, depends very much on whether the family life is now training children to use their possessions in the terms and the spirit of the kingdom of love and service.

HELPFUL READING

Training in Thrift (No. 29 in "American Home Series," Abingdon Press).

The Use of Money, *E. A. Kirkpatrick* (Bobbs-Merrill). An excellent study of the moral and educational aspects of the use of money.

Ethics, *Dewey & Tufts* (Holt). See the references to property for a social basis of discussion.

Money, The Acid Test, *W. Conaughy* (Inter-Church). An argument on "Stewardship" that provokes serious thought on religious responsibility for money.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How would you determine the amount of the child's allowance?
2. What accounting would you expect him to make?
3. Show how you would help him to realize the power of money.
4. How would you help him to realize responsibility for money?

5. How make the gifts of children really their own?
6. What rights have children over their money which we must recognize?
7. How does the use of money train character?
8. How combat the careless use of money?

CHAPTER XXII

READING

Stating the problem: Many seriously minded parents have asked this question: "How can we encourage our children to read good books?"

To many parents this subject will seem to have little meaning in relation to the modern home; they associate the reading habit with other old-fashioned ideas and customs. But a good deal of observation leads to the conclusion that there is a marked difference between the home where books are plentiful and well-worn and the homes where reading is not a common habit. You can tell a lot about a family when you have noted whether there are used books on the shelves and good reading on the tables. Not all children are bookworms; but there is no life so barren as that which is marked by empty book-shelves.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM

This matter has religious importance not because we are thinking of books about religion but because every good book may minister to the life of the spirit; because the habit of reading, properly directed, may constantly contribute to inner strength and vision; because good reading makes us better men and women. See what a book is; it is the spirit, the thought and ideals of some soul, gathered up at its best and open at any hour to us. And here in these pages we find the great souls of all the ages; patiently they wait for us; they never weary; they never falter. Happy are we if, somehow, as we turn the pages we catch the sparkling eyes, the gentle face of him who

speaks, and if for us sometimes reading becomes an experience in which "spirit to spirit may speak."

Every time you bring a good book into the house you bring a new friend, one who can remain until all the children know him, one who is never too busy to talk with them, one who will enrich the family circle, whose thoughts will elevate and whose spirit will refresh every one. Every time a child reads in a great book he has enlarged and enriched his social group; he has exposed himself to the sunlight that has strengthened many lives.

Let us not be misled by this foolish chatter that says "Give me no dead ones: I want only live writers." The great advantage of books is that they are largely independent of time; the ancients are in them alive to-day. Only those who are ignorant of them imagine that the classics are out of date. One of the most successful bankers in England says that if you wish to succeed in business you should read Homer. Even though you cannot read the originals just try the translations and be surprised at their messages for to-day. If we read the books of the New Testament as books we get the same sense of freshness, the same feeling of modern reality.

THE CURRENT DANGER

It is not strange that so many of our young people cease to have any consciousness of the reality of the spiritual when we so consistently act as though the concrete things were the only real ones. Sometimes our attitude toward literature is so apologetic that one would think we were ashamed of thoughts and ideals. When you look at a library do you realize that it is one of the most wonderful, perhaps the most effective means by which the spiritual life of an age is clarified, its best selected and handed down through succeeding ages? It is a reservoir of spiritual refreshing reaching us by means that are most accessible, most enjoyable and most effective. The family that neglects books is neglecting the inner life of its members. It is starving

souls. In effect it is saying to its members, Of course the only really important things in life are those to which we minister by food and clothing; if there were any other important aspects we would not neglect them.

When we speak of religious training in the home we naturally think of direct religious instruction, family worship and training in the observances of religion. All these are highly important, and none of them are overemphasized. Indeed, it would be difficult to mention any aspect of family life and duty that is overemphasized as to its religious significance; but it is just as necessary to remember that the development of every form of spiritual refreshing is a religious duty. We need, also, to emphasize the fact that religious training is a continuous process, going on in many ways and that it is most of all effected by those experiences in the home which in any way minister to and discipline the life of thought, ideals and personal relationships. This is especially true of whatever helps to form ideas as to the meaning of life, as to the things and objects that are most worth while. Now this is what reading is constantly doing, if it is worthwhile reading.

HOW BOOKS TEACH

A character in a book will often be as real a person to the young reader as any one he knows. But these characters in books have a peculiar advantage; we can select them for our children and we can know just what they are going to say; we can usually tell what their purpose is and what ideals they will develop. Often they can talk to our children more successfully than we can. They are teachers whose power we envy. They are friends who give counsel or example in such a setting of interest that they are not easily forgotten. How blind we must be to the child's needs if we do not see to it that such friends and guides are ever ready to walk and talk with him.

Nor are we forgetting or slighting the reading of the scriptures. But this is most valuable when it is most nat-

ural, when it is part of the general habit of reading. The widest readers are likely to be the most intelligent, appreciative and habitual readers of the Bible. The greatest values come when it is read, not as a task, nor as a duty, but as a part of the delight of literature.

If we only knew of the inner hunger of boys and girls in the period of their lives when ideals mean so much, when heroes are as necessary as bread, we would not be guilty of starving them or, when they cry for food, handing them the chaff of the ephemeral magazine or the innane funnies.

These words are not written with the notion that every child rushes home from school to bury himself in a book. He ought not to do so. But along with all his play, with all his irrepressible flood of activity there is developing this inner life with its appetites. That these may be normally and helpfully met there should be awaiting him an abundant supply of ideal food. You can lead a youth to a book-shelf but you cannot force him really to read! But if you leave him long enough with well-filled shelves you will find him reading in time. Some earlier and some later, but all at some time when two things are present, the supply of attractive food for the mind and spirit, and some stirrings of inner appetite.

What books should be at hand? Better get "Finger Posts to Children's Reading" by W. F. Field and "A Mother's List of Books for Children" by G. W. Arnold, and make your selections from these. Do not depend on the current supply unless you can take time to test it out with a sympathetic imagination. If you take time to go to the market to make sure of selecting good table food take time to go to the library and consult with the librarian. If they have a children's librarian, so much the better; you will often find good lists available.

Remember that any book is a religious book that makes the reader think of life in religious terms, that helps him to live more closely to the divine will, that helps him to love men more wisely and devotedly and to work better

for the will of God. The real test of a book is spiritual and social; does it give to the reader the society of good men and women and does it add to his life the fellowship and aid of some great person who has lived and worked for spiritual ends? One might add another test: will this visitor be a welcome guest for a long time?

CASES

One young lad had his taste for reading almost destroyed, so that he could scarcely be persuaded to read any book, by the too-common experience of a high-school course that substituted analyses of literature for an introduction to books and reading. His father was greatly troubled as he saw what the boy was missing. He says that it took about six years to work a cure. He began, after a good interval of rest, by watching the boy's dominant interests. When he became interested in a particular science he hunted around to find a good novel that used that science practically in the plot. He casually mentioned the way the author used his special knowledge. The result was that the boy took a dip in that book, but only a dip. Then he tried some good detective stories, again casually speaking of the exciting problem situation. This time, after several nibbles, the lad took a good bite and finished a book. That was the first book, outside of a text-book, he had finished in years. Then the father patiently tried other interests, with varying success, until he found books about the sport they both loved, boating and sailing. A technical discussion of whether Robertson was right about a sailing predicament sent the boy into a stirring story, and that led to another, until the reading habit became fixed as interest developed and pleasure was experienced.

HELPFUL READING

A Mother's List of Books for Children, *G. W. Arnold* (McClurg). Gives graded list of books with helpful guidance to parents.

The Children's Reading, *F. J. Olcott* (Houghton, Mifflin). Comprehensive and useful lists.

Finger Posts to Children's Reading, *W. F. Field* (McClurg). A useful list of books.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the causes for the decline in the reading of books?
2. Why is this subject important?
3. How would you develop interest in reading?
4. How would you combat the dangers of vicious books?
5. How would you help children to distinguish amongst books?
6. What definite provision will help to develop habits of reading?
7. What books have most influenced you in early life?

CHAPTER XXIII

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTIES

Stating the problem: It comes in a variety of forms, in letters asking for lists of books which children may read so as to give them correct ideas on religious matters, in personal questions of parents who find their children expressing forms of doubt and statements of difficulties that they would never have dared to utter when these parents were young. It comes in the anxious questioning of harassed mothers who complain that their very little ones ask them many questions altogether beyond their intellectual reach.

Of course many questions are asked by children with no expectation of a rational answer, as manifestations of a curiosity that floats, like a summer butterfly, from one object to another. Many of them are questions that no man, no matter how wise, could answer with any finality. Again others are questions that we can answer for ourselves but not so as to be comprehensible to children, or not without danger of setting up permanent misunderstandings in the minds of our children. So that there are some difficulties that time must settle; there are some that we must frankly acknowledge to be beyond settlement; there are some that can be only partially met with the plea for patience and wider general knowledge.

The religious difficulties of little children are seldom consciously religious difficulties; they are difficulties in understanding some of the facts about religion, as to its history and its meaning. They have no more significance than intellectual difficulties in other realms, such as the mysteries of chemistry or electricity afford. But these very

same problems may be really religious matters to young people, so that there will often be a different approach, according to the age and experience of the seeker after light.

In some respects many parents are amongst the worst teachers that could be found in dealing with these problems. If we could, we would say to many, "Don't try to answer these questions; send your children to wiser teachers." Parents often are incapacitated because they have no intellectual sympathy with their children; they cannot look at the problems as the young must look at them. To us older folk there are large areas of life that are like old ledgers; the accounts are all settled; the books are closed; the reckoning cannot be opened up again. But the young have no closed books; their world is all in the making. Their problems cannot be settled by our arbitrary conclusions.

APPROACHING THE PROBLEMS

If we really desire to help our children we must make up our minds to approach their problems in their way. Not that we will wipe out our painfully acquired experience; but that we will try to walk with minds that are at the other end of the road. We will have to gain the patience of the true pedagog who, instead of saying, "You must come to where I am," steps back to where they are and walks with them to the goal.

Another difficulty we older ones must recognize is that there have been many changes in the world since we were young. Some of these changes have been developments in the world of knowledge. Each new generation builds on from where the last one left off. We need, not only the sympathy to go back to the beginning stage of young minds, but also the imagination and open-mindedness to go forward into the new world that is their heritage.

1. The first step is to *prepare ourselves to meet their problems.* We need not hope that they will be without

them. We ought rather to pray that they will be perplexed and troubled, and that we may share their burdens with them. Our preparation can best be made, first, by earnest effort to keep in sympathy with all that is in the minds of our children, and, second, by the effort necessary to keep in touch with what their modern world is thinking. Both kinds of sympathy are of immense importance. Meeting a child's problems is not a special experience which stands alone; it is a part of a constant experience in which parent and child share their lives.

"I wish he would talk to me about it, but he won't," I have heard mothers lament. Of course he will not talk with you about this unless you have developed the habit of talking together about everything. And he will not give you his confidence unless you give him yours. This most desirable freedom of intercourse comes not by accident nor without effort. It takes time; it means that you must often lay aside the thing you would like to do, deferring it for the more important thing, listening to your boy as he talks of that which to you is trifling and to him so impressive.

A poor abused wife in London said that after her husband became an abstainer he treated her "more like a friend than a husband." The pitiful comment suggests that it might help often if parents would try to treat their children more like friends and less according to the pattern of the austere parent. There is something wrong if you are afraid to be chummy lest the boys lose respect for you. Confidence and comradeship are the ways to understanding and sympathy. If you would know your child's religious problems you must keep all the doors open, and they must be free to come in without knocking.

MEETING THEIR PROBLEMS

2. Next, *treat their problems seriously.* Often they are very large to the young. Matters that now seem to us unimportant are catastrophic to them. Have you forgotten

how they appeared to you? Take for granted the child's sincerity. Treat him with intellectual honesty. His vision is clear; it has not been blurred by compromises and he can see through a sophistry; if he does not now he will, to his despair, later. Nothing can persuade him that does not fully and entirely persuade you. It will be wiser to own up that you have some problems still unsolved than to attempt to give him the solutions you do not yet possess.

Be sure you understand his problems. Take pains to distinguish between truth and truth's garments; the latter change with each new age. Verbal forms vary; the verities remain. Do not try to force the young to follow the verbal fashions of a bygone day. Try to get at the root difficulty. Approach it with an open mind. Talk it over with them, not as a closed issue, but as an open field in which you are seeking the truth.

Some parents need to be warned against an overstimulation of the critical mind. They are so anxious that their children shall think of religion in modern terms that they succeed in making of it no more than a compound of negations, a box of riddles, a bag of rattling, disarticulated bones. If only we all could hold to the thought of religion as a life, a way of living together in this home circle, how much more natural would be our approach to it! Our danger now is that all these religious problems shall be viewed as objects outside ourselves, that we shall discuss religion as a system of thought, a something to be defined rather than as a way of life in which truth is learned. Whatever we do we need to help our children to this view and this experience.

3. *Treat their problems practically;* that is, apply to them the solvent of life. Let them appear in the atmosphere of family life where religion is constantly dominant. Life is full of problems that stagger us on paper and are as simple as a song in practice. And some problems that bid fair to bowl us clean over are met, not by solving them, but by hanging on to the great mass of workable facts we already have. The total life of a religious family will tide

many a youth over shoals that would otherwise leave him stranded.

You may feel yourself helpless before some of their problems, but you are never powerless if the family life itself is an exposition of the reality and power of the spiritual. This does not mean that you will smother their questions in pious sentiments; it does mean that living in the family becomes for all an experience of the practicability of Christ's way of life, the way of sacrificial love and service. It reveals the strength and joy of that way; it opens firm paths in which perplexed feet may tread. Young people may tend to magnify theoretical difficulties; they stand hesitating because the charts in their hands are obscure; but once give them clear paths, trodden highways of living, demonstrated in everyday experience, and they will step forward. Then, walking with them, some problems are forgotten and others we can help them solve as we go forward, step with step, together. Sincerity, sympathy and fellowship in life and service, these are the ways we must go with them if we would help them.

HELPFUL READING

Religious Education in the Family, *H. F. Cope* (Univ. of Chicago Press). The book gives background of subject, Ch. VI deals with children's religious ideas.

The Training of Children in Religion, *G. Hodges* (Appleton). Good, practical discussion of the need for training.

The Dawn of Character, *E. E. Read Mumford* (Longmans). All good, especially Ch. XII, on this subject.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What attitude of mind is essential in approaching the religious problems of children?
2. What is necessary to maintain confidence?
3. What dangerous mistakes do parents often make in dealing with children's religious difficulties?
4. What is the value of discussion of difficulties?
5. What is the special value of turning attention to duties and service?

6. What difficulties troubled you in childhood and how were they met?
7. What are the causes of children's religious difficulties?
8. What responsibility do parents have for the religious ideas which children acquire outside the home?

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Stating the problem: If we parents desire our children to be religious ought we not to give them religious instruction? But how can we do this when we know so little and the subject is so difficult?

Instruction about religion may occupy a minor place in the total program of training Christian character but it occupies a front-rank position in the minds of anxious parents. It is the problem most likely to be set first when these parents bring you their questions. The day-school cannot teach religion; the child's reading is likely to include nothing, or next to nothing on this subject; the church-school has all too short a time; apparently no one thinks seriously about the pathway of knowledge as one road which children must tread in the way to the religious life. It is clearly a duty resting on the child's first and most intimate teachers.

THE DIFFICULTY

Parents realize and regret the ignorance of their children. Yet they feel as though some mental paralysis lay upon them when they would introduce the subject of religion, and they find themselves often powerless to help when children themselves open the subject in the form of questions and problems. It is easier to talk about almost anything else, because almost everything else comes up naturally, in the course of everyday events and conversation, at some time. Also, other subjects come easier because we know more about them. The difficulty has been

expressed more than once by an anxious parent in practically the same phrase, "It all seems so strange, so unreal."

That states the heart of the difficulty, and it also indicates the solution. What is this that is so strange and unreal that we feel as though we were dragging it into our talks with children? What are these matters that we are constantly deferring because we cannot find a natural opening for them? And why this unanimity of testimony to its unnaturalness? Is religion thus foreign to our everyday life? Is it a something that is kept separate, something that calls for a new vocabulary, that requires a special and formal introduction? If so, then so much the worse for our religion. True religion cannot be foreign to life. Our Teacher spoke always of life and His teachings rose out of the immediate life about Him. No; our difficulty does not lie in the nature of religion; it lies in the fact that we have lost sight of religion and have been trying to find ways of teaching theology to our children.

THE PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLE

Jesus anticipated the wisest of our modern pedagogs when He declared that if any one would do His will he should know of the doctrine. The way to learn is through living, and we who would teach must know how people learn before we can teach them. We may fix for our guidance a very simple principle, that *we are the guides of lives* rather than instructors in any set of theories or forms of knowledge.

Does this mean, then, that I, as a parent, have no responsibility for instruction? Not at all; it means that I must see to it that instruction rises out of life; it means that I have a greater pedagogical responsibility, so to guide the experience of living that children will either discover truth for themselves or will so feel their need of light that they will become eager seekers after truth. Then there will be no need to force openings for instruction.

Perhaps this principle may be illustrated by a single example. Take the question of children's ideas with regard to God. At first we have those questions that young children nearly all ask, about the appearance, the power and the location of God. Quite naturally these seem to afford welcome openings for instruction, and so we try to set before the child's mind the ideas of omnipotence and immanence. Some will attempt this in one form and some in another. Some will go little further than the attempt to show Him as the always loving Father of all.

But, whatever our method of answering those early questions, we are likely later to be shocked to discover that, as the child grows up, he has no clear ideas as to God. What has happened? His early questions had no special meaning even to him; they were of the same class as all his other endless interrogations, a curious turning over of every stone in his pathway to see what was on the other side. All the definition part of our explanation has passed away and only that which could be used has remained. So that the Father concept has passed also unless we have been careful to make it usable by leading the child to think often of the great, tender love, to pray to that Father, and daily to live in His love.

In a word, the idea of God comes not through definition but through use. It is not so important that the child shall be able to describe God as that we shall help him to discover God. It is not so important that he thinks about God as how he thinks about Him; the what will shape itself out of the how. The child's theology will form itself out of the stuff of living, as he finds God a reality in everyday life.

The pathway to instruction in religion then is that of guidance in the practice of religion. All that these children will ever need to know of religion has its roots somewhere in what they will experience as they seek to live the life of the kingdom of God with one another. Whether God will be an arbitrary despot, a benevolent monarch or a loving Father will depend on whether they are trained to

live a life of mechanical compliance with rules, a life of submissive service or one of a loving family.

This may seem to make the problem of instruction so simple that it is really removed. On the contrary, while it does make it simple, it lifts instruction to a higher level. It is not easy to guide in this way of life. It will not be enough to say, You should do this, or You shouldn't do that. It calls for a sympathetic understanding of childhood. It sets before us this profound question, What is the right and natural religious life for a child? It sets the question before us every hour. It calls us to consider all the child's daily living, all his constant experience, in the light of his developing relations to his Father and the great family of all mankind.

It would give a new seriousness to table-talk if we always realized that the way we help children to think of others helps to determine how they will think of God. If they do not learn to love their brothers how can they love Him? And if they do learn to love how natural it is to think of Him! Then, when questions are asked, we no longer have idle speculations, but it is more as though they inquired, What would our Father do about this? Or, how does this make for the family of common love and goodness?

This is the first principle of religious instruction in the family: use the laboratory method, lead these young pupils into the experience of religion. Help them to know its realities through life; see that they approach its problems through reality. Most of the problems will answer themselves; those that remain will be so close to life that children and young people will present them naturally. What we may do with them we may consider in a later chapter.

HELPFUL READING

THE CHILD AND RELIGION, *G. E. Dawson* (Univ. of Chicago Press). A study of the nature of religious life of children.

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, *F. Peabody* (Macmillan). Sets the home life in its place in the larger program.

RELIGIOUS TRAINING IN HOME AND SCHOOL, *Sneath, Hodges & Tweedy* (Macmillan). Much good material is suggested.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What hinders our teaching religion to our own children?
2. Explain Jesus' principle of teaching.
3. What is the peculiar pedagogical advantage parents have?
4. What is meant by the practical method?
5. What are the especial difficulties of teaching by the theological method?
6. How would you help children to better ideas of God?

CHAPTER XXV

DIRECT RELIGIOUS TEACHING

Stating the problem: "How can we deal directly with children's religious development?"

It is evident that those educational opportunities and duties of the family which have been discussed in this series are clearly religious. Surely training in the attitudes and habits of the right life are parts of religious training. But this question, stated in many different forms, brings forward the problem particularly of religious instruction, training in religious knowledge.

WHY AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM

A large part of the child's religious knowledge must be gained in the family. This is true, first, because the family is the most natural agency for instruction in matters so intimately personal and so influential as to character. It is true, also, as a result of the limitations of other educational agencies. The public schools cannot formally teach religion; we are all agreed about that. We would not be satisfied to have our children taught religion in their day schools. The church school, or Sunday school, at present does not have sufficient time properly to teach religion.

It is true that the church school might teach much more; but even at the best, one hour a week is too short a time to teach so large a subject. For the teaching of religion is something much more inclusive than teaching the Bible. It has to do not only with theories or doctrines about God and man and the future; it has to do with every spiritual aspect of life; it touches conduct at every point; it touches

all social relations; it includes the whole art of living as religious persons.

This task falls to the family because here the child spends its earliest years and these are the very best years for certain most important and influential forms of religious instruction. You cannot teach a three-year-old a system of theology; but you can make the thought of God the loving Father perfectly natural to him; you can establish habits of thinking about this world as the home of eternal love and righteousness.

If the religious education of children does not begin in the very earliest years opportunities are lost that are never made up. These are the years when children receive not so much definite concepts as mental colorings and tendencies. These come from the atmosphere and customs of the family, from the mental habits of parents and from the regular expressions of religion in family life.

The family is the child's first and most influential teacher of religion because religion can only be taught through personality. Knowledge about religion may come in other ways, but the knowledge of religion comes only through religious lives. Just as the home exists for the sake of personality so personality is its greatest power. Simply living with people is learning their way of life. One cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that the greatest teaching potency of the family works through the power of lives, simply lived day after day, in the religious spirit, in loyalty to divine ideals.

ADVANTAGES OF THE HOME

But where lives are truly religious religion becomes quite normal to thought and conversation. Religious instruction becomes effective not so much in formal periods as unconsciously in normal intercourse. The everyday conversation usually can be led and lifted to religious levels. It is possible to discuss almost any subject in such a way that it becomes really religious. This helps to make re-

ligion normal in all the child's life; it makes it not a thing set apart, but a heavenly color and divine quality which must pervade all living.

No form of religious teaching can be more effective than to make all our leadership, that is our teaching of lives, really religious, to treat whatever may be the subject of conversation in a religious spirit. Of course this does not mean dealing with it in a mournful, "holy tone"; there will be no less joy in it, there will be much deeper meaning.

Wherever the spirit of religion pervades all conversation and conduct it will come explicitly to the surface in at least two forms, in questions that are specifically about religious things, and in actions which are designed to express the religious spirit in a special manner.

Conversation about religion is not necessarily religious; it is for us to determine whether it shall be. Shredding the sermon you have just heard is not a spiritual exercise at the Sunday dinner table. But out of the sermon may rise many questions which can be discussed so as to make the meaning of religion clear and helpful. So will questions rise out of everyday experience, out of the current reading, out of children's thoughts about life. How shall we meet such questions? Only in a religious spirit, that is the spirit of absolute reverence for truth, of reverence for these growing young lives and of desire to help them to full living in God's society here.

PREPARATION

It is doubtful if we can make any specific preparation for the questions that children will ask on religious subjects. But we can do this: determine that we will know all that we can, so that, at least, they may realize that we do not treat the matter as a negligible one. Even the wisest and best-informed parent will be faced with questions to which he must respond with a confession of ignorance; but no wise parent can hope to see his children grow as religious persons when he is content to know nothing in a

definite way about religion. We who are so free to criticize the child's teachers often have a very narrow footing of knowledge on which to stand. That is not treating the child fairly. We owe them the very best our minds can gather for them. Our duty is not discharged when our hands have wrought; we have the duties of mental and spiritual parenthood.

This duty of treating with respect the child's search for knowledge about religion should suggest an examination of our book-shelves and library tables. How many parents seek out the sources of information in order to deal fairly with the child's inquiries in this field? How many make anything like the provision for the child's reading in these matters that we make in all others?

Foundations of religious living are laid in the family in the explicit forms of religious acts. If there is real religious living in this group then at some time and in some way they will seek to give expression to it as a group. One of the ways will be through the devotion of certain periods of prayer and thanksgiving, to worship and song. We will set aside some hours as different from others, as times in which we give expression to those ideals which have been our strength right along, as times when we make explicit what has been inexplicit in all the religious life of the family.

Family worship is really a very simple matter, no more than affording a time, it may be very brief, when we can sing together, pray together, talk together and together recall the high sources of life's inspiration. A simple Psalm said together with a short prayer; a song on another day with a chance to talk quietly over some high thought.

The explicit expression of religion also goes out from the family into larger social groups. The family life flows over into the church. The religious loyalties that develop in the smaller group are carried over naturally into the larger one wherever the leaders are conscious of the social needs of growing lives. The church becomes the larger, community family of the religious life.

HELPFUL READING

CHILD NATURE AND CHILD NURTURE, *E. P. St. John* (Pilgrim Press).
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY, *H. F. Cope* (Univ. of Chicago Press).
BECKONINGS FROM LITTLE HANDS, *P. DuBois* (Dodd, Mead & Co.). A beautifully written little book of insight and sympathy with the spiritual nature of little children.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What especial responsibility rests upon parents for religious instruction?
2. What advantages has the family in this work?
3. What preparations should parents make?
4. How do you distinguish between the immediate problems of religious instruction and the general work of religious nurture in the home?
5. What are the most favorable conditions for religious instruction?
6. What are the most important elements of children's religious knowledge?
7. Give a review of your own experience as to religious teaching of parents?

CHAPTER XXVI

CAN WE HAVE FAMILY WORSHIP?

What is family worship? We feel that something very valuable and vital has gone out of our family life in the passing of the custom of family worship. What is it we seek to restore? Is it the regular observance of Scripture reading and prayer, or is it the essential value in worship? It might help us to restore worship if we could see just what is desired. Is it not this? Such social acts and customs as will do these things: definitely strengthen our sense of relationship with God, develop the reality of his constant presence in the home, help us to see the home as a spiritual institution, and help all members of the family to desire and purpose family living in religious terms. Worship is an attitude to be brought about by social situations which express our fellowship with God; it is the precipitation, in definite acts, of our joy in living as God's children, our desire for the life of the Spirit and our purpose to do his will.

The entire atmosphere of the home may be religious—and this is the fundamental thing; but where there is such a saturation there will be precipitation; atmosphere will form action, a constant experience will have special occasions. It is not enough to say religion is the whole life of this home. We need identification of the life in comprehensible terms. Children, especially, need aids to recognize this spiritual life. Where we really seek to worship these are our problems: how shall this constant spirit and purpose most fittingly find expression? What will best strengthen it? How may we find time for such seasons? How may they fit naturally into the family life?

DIFFICULTIES

Family worship has declined, not because people are less religious, but because life is more complex. The programs of all the members of a family are likely to be dreadfully crowded. Breakfast is eaten hurriedly; school and shop and office snatch nearly every one out of the home; after the evening meal there seems to be scarce time to take up home studies and social engagements. If it should be urged that we might take a little more time, the answer is that these time schedules are set for us by others; they are imposed upon us by society or by the hard facts of our present life. Certainly there are few families in the cities where it would be possible to gather all the group for the leisurely reading and formal prayer that used to constitute family worship.

Other problems are even more serious. Perhaps we have made several efforts to have family worship, and the attempts have been abandoned because of a sense of formality and unreality that could not be overcome. The father felt as though he stepped out of natural relations and assumed a priestly rôle. Perhaps the attempt was abandoned because we felt unequal to the task; we simply did not know how to proceed. It is easy to read a short selection from the Bible; but who will make the selection and how shall we avoid monotonous repetition? It may seem to be easy to pray with a family; but if you have children and are conscious of their natural thoughts you will find the attempt to make prayer real and natural to them about as severe a mental task as you could wish. Another difficulty lies in the fact that formal acts of worship seem to be even more foreign to our children than to ourselves; the type of family worship that has passed does not seem to belong to the life of the family to-day.

CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

This is a serious situation, not so much because old forms have passed away as because we have found nothing to take their place. We need now to find our way to family customs which will freely express a genuine consciousness of God and of fellowship with him and with one another on the highest levels of our experience, and in forms and methods that are real and natural to family life.

Some conditions are fundamental. Family worship must be essentially democratic, not forced or under compulsion. It must be family worship, by all as a common act, by the will of all. It must rise up out of the family life, because the members want it. But in scope it must reach forward, beyond the immediate wills of the members. So there are here two elements usually missing: the common desire or democratic will, and the real leadership. How may these be developed?

Children must learn to pray; praying children and praying parents cannot help having common prayer. Here the individual experience often precedes the social purpose. Children must be encouraged and guided in private prayer. When children pray with their parents they will pray with one another. Then the social prayer will come out of their desires. Then social prayer and private prayer develop side by side. It must be remembered that private prayer is a social act.

In the same manner the use of the Bible will grow out of genuine desire. Our children do not know the Bible because we make it a book of lessons chiefly. These lessons seldom touch the parts they would really love. Its use in the church service makes it, to them, a far-away, different, unknowable book. It is possible, by reading aloud some of the thrilling, sweeping poetic passages, to make it a new book to them. Or try reading aloud the story of Ruth, as a whole, perhaps omitting some details non-essential to them.

In the degree that worship rises out of their wills they

will participate; in the degree that they share freely in worship it will lose its formality and its sense of unreality. It is impossible to avoid reality and vitality in that which children voluntarily do.

Here also lies the method by which we shall move out into new forms of family worship. Given such an occasion, children will talk freely; they will contribute of their knowledge of passages they enjoy; they will move on into song or into instrumental music that expresses their feelings.

SUGGESTIONS OF METHOD

Meet the time problem by careful choice of the occasion when all are together, when some item of the day's schedule can be crowded up a little and when the least change will be necessary. Many are finding the dinner hour, if at night, the best time; then, either remaining at the table, or quietly moving into another room, at least a few minutes may be taken.

Better to be more brief than any may desire than to be longer than they wish. It is surprising how much joy can be had in five minutes. Have a purpose. Why should not one and another be responsible for determining plans in advance?

Do not begin with rigid, invariable rules; better the occasional worship that is so enjoyed that the nearer it can come to regularity the better all will like it.

Avoid a monotonous program. Let variety arise out of changing desires. Occasionally let one or another determine the nature of what is done.

Cultivate coöperative attainment. For example, begin a Psalm that is fairly familiar and try to repeat it, each one aiding others as they hesitate or forget. Families have learned many Psalms and other passages that way without ever thinking of learning.

Do not be afraid of but rather covet immediate reality. Let children pray for and talk about the real things of everyday life. There is something beautiful about the

prayer of the very little boy: "Dod bless all people on twolley cars, espec'y on route seventy-five;" that was the route his dear grandmother lived on.

Remember that worship may have many forms; it is not doing something for God; it is doing something toward him. One can remember quiet conversations that throbbed with aspiration. Talking with one another may be talking with him. Guard and cultivate as highly precious the tendency to linger and talk over the day. Nothing that business or society can offer can be worth as much as this when the family, perhaps by the fireside or only the light from without, communes with uncovered hearts.

MATERIALS

There are many books of selections available. But a printed book of worship is very likely to create an undesirable feeling of formality. This may be avoided by having the members of the family make their own books of worship. Make selections from the following materials and add others. As each new selection becomes a part of the program, it may be copied or clipped out and made a part of each one's own book of worship by pasting it in a loose-leaf note book.

1. *Biblical Passages: Method.* Learn these passages by using them. Do not ask children to memorize them; let parents memorize the passages and invite the younger members of the family to join in repeating them; they learn quickly by this method. Much pleasure will be found in chanting some of the Psalms.

PASSAGES

a. The Psalms:

Psalm 100—"Make a joyful noise."
Psalm 72:18, 19—"Blessed be the Lord God."
Psalm 23—"The Lord is my shepherd."
Psalm 121—"I will lift up mine eyes."
Psalm 24:1-7—"The earth is the Lord's."

Psalm 24:7-10—"Lift up your heads."
Psalm 1—"Blessed is the man."
Psalm 37:1-6—"Fret not thyself."
Psalm 67—"God be merciful unto us."
Psalm 103:1-4—"Bless the Lord, O my soul."
Psalm 119:9-11—"Wherewithal shall a young man."
Psalm 95:1-6—"O come, let us sing."
Psalm 90:14-17—"O satisfy us early."
Psalm 84:8-12—"O Lord of hosts."

b. Other Old Testament passages:

Isaiah 26:1-4—"In that day shall this song."
Isaiah 35:1-4—"The wilderness . . . shall rejoice."
Isaiah 35:5-7.
Isaiah 35:8-10.
Isaiah 55:6, 7—"Seek ye the Lord."
Isaiah 40:3-5—"The voice of him."
1 Kings 8:57, 58—"The Lord our God be with us."
Numbers 6:24-27—"The Lord bless thee."

c. New Testament passages:

Matthew 5:3-7—Beatitudes.
Matthew 5:8-12—Beatitudes.
Matthew 22:37-39—"Thou shalt love the Lord."
Matthew 11:28-30—"Come unto me."
Matthew 6:26-29—"Behold the birds."
1 Corinthians 13:1-3—The Love Epic.
1 Corinthians 13:4-7—The Love Epic.
1 Corinthians 13:8-10, 13—The Love Epic.
1 John 4:19-21—"We love him because."
John 15:12-14—"This is my commandment."

If parents will indicate the passages relating to things in which they are interested they will learn them almost unconsciously.

11. *Scripture Reading: Method.* At times brief selections from the Bible may be read. It is important that they shall be chosen for worshipful character, interest, and

brevity. The arrangement of selections furnished by the International Bible Readers' Association and *Home Daily Bible Readings,* prepared by the International Lesson Committee, *Bible Reading and Religious Training in the Home* (Veach, Presbyterian Board), *A Book of Family Worship* (Presbyterian Board), will be found useful. They should not be followed mechanically.

III. *Hymns: Method.* Some hymns are suitable for simple recitation, on account of the purity of their poetic style, but children will always enjoy singing together in the family group. The greatest care must be taken to preserve the informality of this part of worship. Time will often forbid its inclusion, and it may be held as a special pleasure for occasions.

SELECTIONS

"Thou that once at mother's knee."
"I think when I read that sweet story of old."
"The King of love."
"Can a little child like me."
"Abide with me."
"Lord, for to-morrow and its needs."
"New every morning is the love" (morning).
"Sun of my soul" (evening).
"God is love, his mercy brightens."
"Away in a manger."
"Day is dying in the west."
"The Lord is my shepherd, I'll not want."
"O Master, let me walk with thee."
"O Zion haste, thy mission glad fulfilling."
"Fling out the banner."
"Jerusalem the Golden."
"For the beauty of the earth."
"Jesus loves me."
"O love that wilt not let me go."
"Jesus, Tender Shepherd, hear me."
"America the Beautiful."
"God save our splendid men."

The important thing under this head in any family is to encourage the singing of helpful hymns. It will help to have at hand several good books of selections. We suggest: *Worship and Song* (Pilgrim Press), *In Excelsis* (Century Co.), *Methodist Sunday School Hymnal* (Methodist Book Concern), *Hymnal for American Youth* (Century), *The Methodist School Hymnal* (Wesleyan Methodist London), *The Book of Worship for the Church School* (Scribners), and *Hymns You Ought to Know* (one hundred great hymns with account of each) (Revell). The Presbyterian Board of Sabbath Schools in Canada publishes a leaflet of hymns for memorization.

IV. *Prayer:* Informal prayers are usually best. They should be always brief, so simple that all can really join in them. Do not try to include all subjects every day. Beware of forming habits of forms of words. For those who desire prayers to read there are the many splendid "collects" in the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church, and there are other books containing helpful prayers.

Whatever prayers are used, it will be well often to close with the Lord's Prayer, for in this all can join aloud.

V. *Grace at Table:* The following are titles of books containing suitable forms for the "blessing" at the tables:

Grace Before Meat, Wells, United Society Christian Endeavor.

Table Graces, M. E. Munson, Bible House, New York.

At Mother's Knee, Davis, Pilgrim Press.

HELPFUL READING

Religious Education in the Family, *H. F. Cope* (Univ. of Chicago Press). Especially Chs. XI, XII for explicit details.

BOOKS OF WORSHIP

At Mother's Knee, *O. S. Davis* (Abingdon Press).

The Household Altar, *W. C. Gannett* (Author, Rochester, N. Y.).

A Book of Family Worship (Presbyterian Board of Publication).

Behold, a Sower, *L. C. Hastings* (Beacon Press).

Four Weeks of Family Prayers, *W. E. Barton* (Puritan Press, Oak Park, Ill.).

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How many families, within your personal knowledge, have regular family worship?
2. Describe the methods followed, as to hour, character of worship?
3. Does the custom of Grace at table help the spirit of worship; and what effects is it likely to have?
4. If possible give the unrestrained opinions of children as to family worship.
5. What benefits should rise from family worship?
6. What dangers may be found in the practice?
7. What are the most serious hindrances?
8. Why do older children sometimes seem to object while younger ones do not?
9. Is it best to have a fixed time, or a fixed program? Give reasons for answers.
10. In your memory of family worship what stands out as most valuable? Why?

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